

# IN THESE TIMES

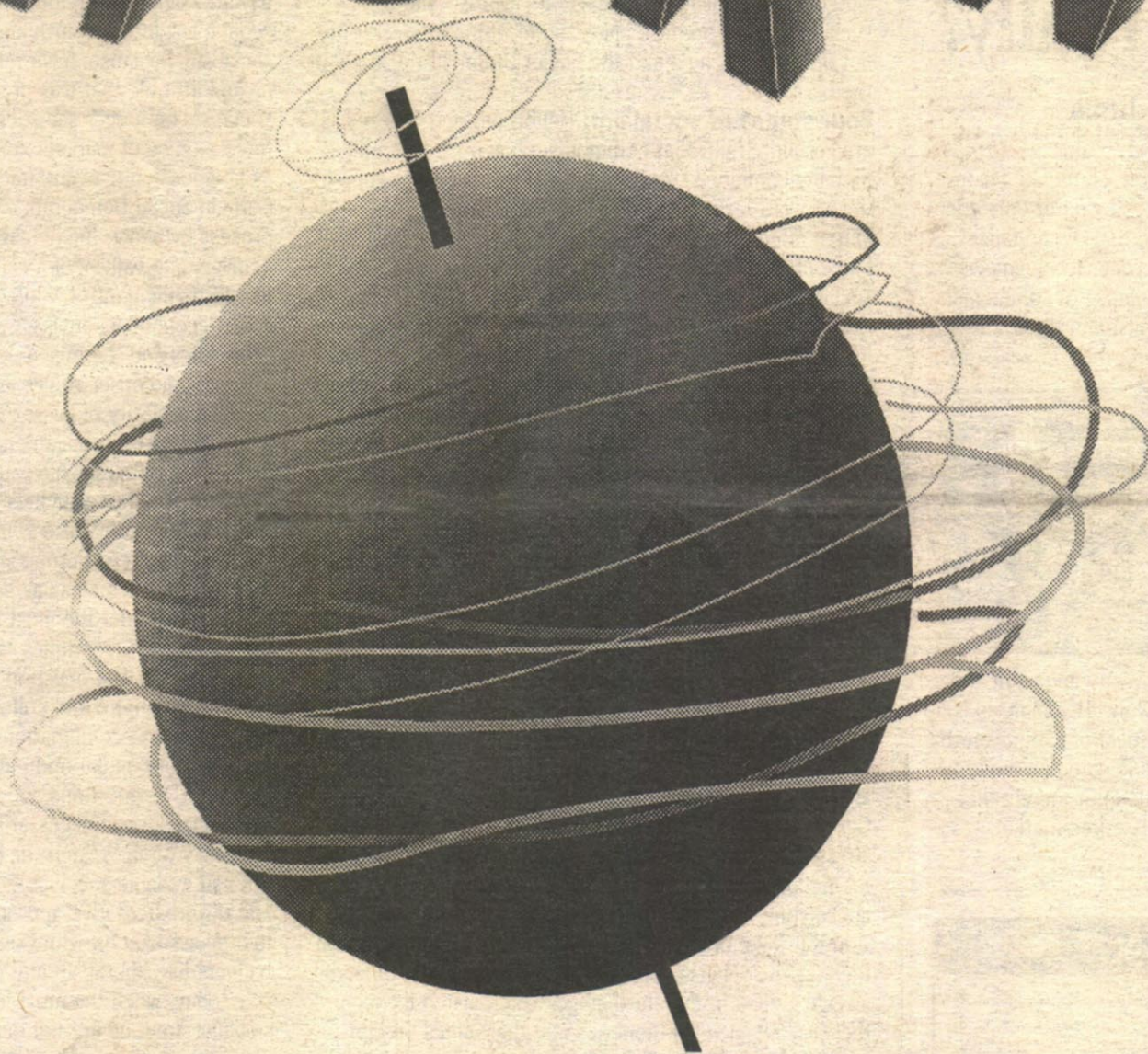
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A S T H E W O R L D

C H U R N S



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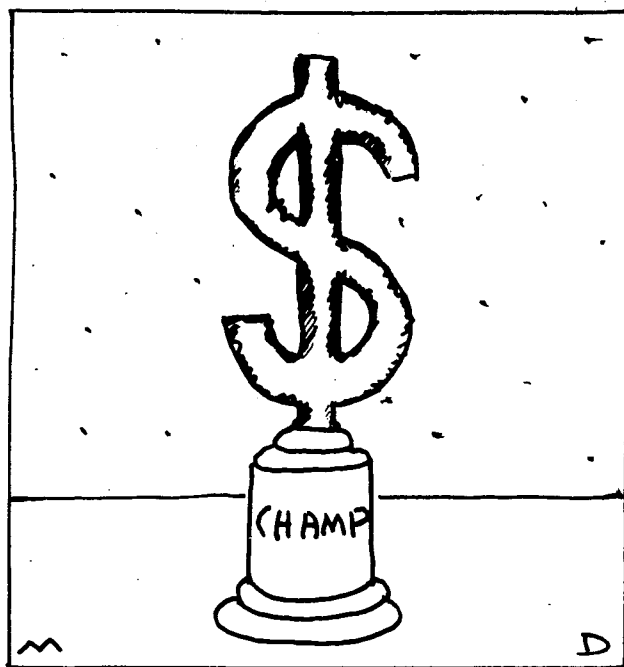
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# Capitalism redux, or does it really?

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

Recent events in the Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe have raised portentous questions not only about the future of communism, but also that of capitalism. Writers ranging from Robert Heilbroner to Zbigniew Brzezinski have interpreted the collapse of communist ideology as a vindication of capitalism. In the January 23 *New Yorker*, Heilbroner writes, "Less than 75 years after

## INSIDE STORY

it officially began, the contest between capitalism and socialism is over: capitalism has won." His analysis is, in fact, less celebratory and more critical of capitalism than that simple statement appears to indicate, but some conservative commentators have argued not merely that capitalism, but Milton Friedman-style free market capitalism, has triumphed.

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Meanwhile, Alexander Cockburn in *The Nation* and Paul Sweezy and Harry Magdoff, the editors of *Monthly Review*, have criticized the recent reform movements in the communist bloc for promoting the restoration of capitalism. While Brzezinski in his new book *The Grand Failure* sees communist ideology as thoroughly discredited but communist systems as enduring monstrosities incapable of overnight alteration, Cockburn, Sweezy and Magdoff see communist ideology as redeemable but threatened by both Stalinist bureaucrats and bourgeois reformers. Sweezy and Magdoff's hero remains Mao of the Cultural Revolution. "Mao is the only real Marxist at the leadership level in the post-Marx period," Sweezy says. Cockburn endorses sociologist James Petras' view that the recent revolt in China is a struggle between "managerial supporters of the market and working-class defenders of democratic collectivism."

Brzezinski, Cockburn, Sweezy and Magdoff, despite their obvious political differences, share an underlying premise about capitalism and communism: the citizens of the world face a stark, exclusive choice between two world systems, one characterized by markets and private enterprise and the other (in Sweezy's words) by "the negation of capitalism." Brzezinski holds out for capitalism, Cockburn, Sweezy and Magdoff for some version of communism or (in Magdoff's words) "utopian socialism." This premise leads to unfortunate conclusions not only about China and the Soviet Union, but also about the U.S.

**Four stages of socialism:** Heilbroner and Brzezinski are certainly right that communism has been discredited. In many communist states, the intelligentsia have gone to the opposite extreme and are backing the doctrines of Milton Friedman rather than Karl Marx. But does the disgrace of communism carry over to all varieties of socialism?

There have been four stages in the history of socialism. In the first, from the early 19th century to 1875, when the German social democratic movement was unified, socialism emerged as a theoretical critique of capitalism. In Marx's hands, socialism was the last stage of the Hegelian dialectic, achieved through violent revolution. Socialist and then communist society would eradicate the key structures of capitalism, including the market.

In the second stage of socialism, lasting from 1875 to World War I and the Russian Revolution of 1917, socialist parties in Europe and the U.S. developed a practical doctrine that in many ways diverged from Marx's rigid formulations. The American Socialist Party, for example, allied itself with agrarian populists who wanted to protect small farmers against monopolies. American socialism also developed in tandem with progressives like John Dewey and Christian socialists like Walter Rauschenbusch. In Germany, Eduard Bernstein's evolutionary doctrine stressed building alliances between the working class and the middle class and rejected Marx's vision of an apocalyptic transition from capitalism to socialism.

In the wake of World War I and the Russian Revolution, the idea of socialism became a blunt instrument of Soviet foreign policy. In this third stage, which lasted through the '60s, Soviet revolutionaries and their allies precipitated a split in the West between Communists and Socialists (or Social Democrats) and cut short the process by which the socialist parties were beginning to transform Marx's doctrine into a viable democratic politics and economics.

Soviet Communists wildly distorted socialist theory. The early Bolsheviks did not believe that the Soviet Union could create a socialist society in isolation from the rest of Europe. After the civil war, Lenin foresaw socialists providing leadership to Soviet capitalism until revolution swept the more advanced Western countries. But as historian Moshe Lewin recounts in *Lenin's Last Struggle*, Stalin laid aside Lenin's qualms about Soviet socialism and proclaimed the existence of a socialist state in the Soviet Union. The effect was to transform socialism from a theory of history subject to revision into an ideology that justified the rule of the party elite.

Soviet society evolved along lines largely unforeseen by Marx or the pre-World War I Socialists. It is a society in which the state functions as a collective capitalist extracting a surplus from the working population. Far from being a "failure," as Brzezinski charges, this command

economy achieved extremely rapid growth from the '30s through the '60s and only became an impediment to growth as the world economy began to shift toward a high-tech, knowledge-based form of industrial production. Its economic success buttressed its ideological claims, both at home and in Third World countries looking for an alternative to the chaotic model of growth being imposed upon them by the advanced capitalist nations.

During this period, socialist movements in the West were split between Social Democrats and Communists. Only in Sweden, where Social Democrats assumed power in the '30s and where Communists remained a small sect, did socialism continue to evolve as a practical political philosophy. But beginning in the late '60s, both Socialists and Communists on the European mainland began to re-evaluate their relationship, both to each other and to Soviet-style communism. Socialist parties in Germany and France adopted a more critical view of contemporary capitalism, while Communist parties in Italy, Australia and Spain adopted a more critical view of Soviet communism.

**What is to be undone:** The rise of Deng Xiaoping in China, the emergence of Solidarity in Poland and the accession of Mikhail Gorbachov in the Soviet Union have led to widespread popular rejection of Communist ideology and significant reform of Communist command economies. In this fourth and latest stage of world socialism, Socialists have returned to the kind of experimental attitude that was prevalent before World War I. Socialists no longer see socialism as incompatible with the existence of markets nor the transition to socialism, as an apocalyptic event. Italian Communists and West German Social Democrats envisage socialism as a gradual process by which the heights, but not necessarily the plateaus and valleys of a capitalist economy will be subject to public control, while many East European and Soviet economists envisage a convergence between their economies and the mixed economies of the West.

American conservatives and leftists have been misled by the popularity of laissez-faire economic doctrine among Eastern European and even Soviet intellectuals. Ideological tyrannies have always bequeathed their opposites, but whether a politics endures depends upon the real conditions in which it must operate. The historical context of Eastern Europe is likely to prove as inhospitable to Friedman's ideas as does the American economy, where even under the most conservative of presidents, the government continues to increase its intrusion in economic life. The question in Eastern Europe is not between laissez-faire and collectivist economics, but between different combinations of public and private enterprise and of popular and elite control.

In the U.S., questions about capitalism, communism and socialism will necessarily assume a different form than they do in Western or Eastern Europe. The U.S. has not had a viable socialist movement since World War I, and those alternative approaches that were not discredited by association with Communism have flown other banners like liberalism and progressivism. This remains true today, when the most important contributions to a socialist America are not being made by self-described socialists writing in Marxist journals, but by so-called progressives and liberals.

In the U.S., the conflict between capitalism and socialism currently boils down to mundane questions about social control of capital: will government economic planning be wrested from the Defense Department and lodged in the Commerce Department? Will the defense budget be drastically cut or allowed to dominate government approaches to economic growth? Will the government battle not only unfair trade restrictions in other countries but also American multinationals that display no allegiance to American workers and consumers? Will the government protect sharks like Frank Lorenzo or will it use its power to encourage experiments in worker ownership?

The neoconservatives and the neo-Leninists who divide the world between communism and capitalism are living in the past. Communism has proved to be as evanescent as its capitalist cousin, fascism. The abiding alternatives are not capitalism and communism, but democratic capitalism and a mature socialism tempered by experience and inoculated against one-party rule. □



By Alisa Joyce

BEIJING

**A**MERICA'S CUDDLY COMMUNIST SWEET-heart has turned inexplicably vicious. After a decade-long lovefest between our two nations, it seems we have been fooling ourselves about how far China's institutionalized autocracy can bend to accommodate reform.

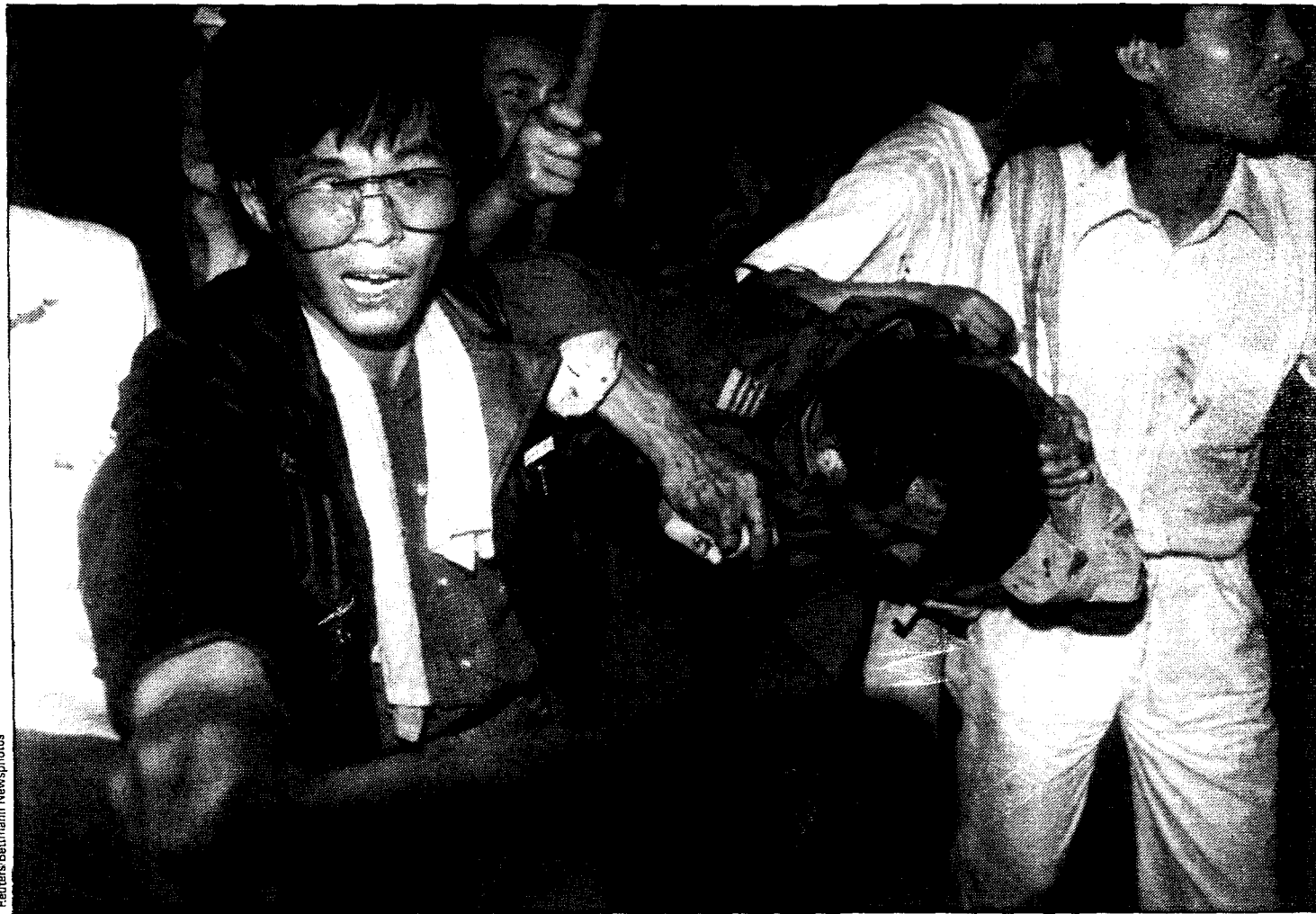
Americans loved to love China. The Chinese practiced what seemed—at least in the past decade—to be a relatively benign and even acceptable form of communism. It was cultural, communal, even Confucian. Leader Deng Xiaoping's "open-door policy" implied confident ideological flexibility and an economic pragmatism that Americans could at least respect.

Despite a few short-lived anti-Western backlashes, the Democracy Wall crackdown in 1989, the anti-"spiritual pollution" and anti-"bourgeois liberalization" campaigns in 1983 and 1986 respectively—China seemed to be moving inexorably toward the West. Forward, that is, with more openness and more freedom.

While Western observers have viewed the prospects for real reform in the Soviet Union with skepticism, the conventional wisdom on China has posited a country determined to modernize, albeit cautiously, and determined never to repeat the mistakes of its radical past. The Cultural Revolution—a decade from 1966 through 1976 of violent rebellion, economic devastation and political extremism—had taught the Chinese a lesson, it was assumed. They would never go back.

**Twist of fate:** During the weeks of demonstrations in Beijing last month, one of the most compelling placards raised above the crowds was a traffic sign forbidding U-turns: a big red circle, a U-turn arrow and a red slash across the middle. Protesters were proudly declaring their determination to

## Sino-American romance drowns in blood



Reuters/Bettmann Newsphotos

The Beijing maelstrom: a captured tank driver is rescued from angry protesters.

move forward with China's development, not to retreat into acquiescence. Yet the students are now being forced to do just that.

The crackdown on the Patriotic Democratic Student Movement came after weeks of climax and anti-climax, as fear alternated with euphoria, empowerment and defiance. At first the government's threats appeared

to be relatively empty, even as troops moved in to take over the state news organizations, warnings were issued to the foreign press and government loudspeakers on Tiananmen Square threatened protesters with unnamed punishment if they did not retreat. No one observing or participating in these events anticipated the eventual degree

of government retaliation against the Tiananmen tent city. And no one expected the old men to wreak their revenge so thoroughly.

The first shock, felt around the world, was the assault on the square the night of June 3 and in the early morning hours of June 4. Watching the convoy move east through Fuxingmen, a now famous and bloody intersection one mile from the square, Western reporters were incredulous and awestruck at the brutal battle beginning before their eyes. City residents who had swarmed out of their warrens and were massed on the streets by the thousands screamed in despair as their neighbors were felled by indiscriminate gunshots, as bus barricades burst

### Students' democracy movement was about a lawful and honest China

Deng Xiaoping calls the pro-democracy movement a scheme led by people "attempting to overthrow the Communist Party and establish a capitalist republic in China." This is the delusion of a very old man who has forgotten more than he knows—the same one who as recently as 1986 managed to redefine Chinese socialism to mean anything that works to develop the country. The students made the mistake of taking his words to heart.

Chinese students, intellectuals, workers, bureaucrats, journalists and common people who participated in the democracy movement last month were not trying to overthrow the Communist system, but to reform it from within. Their goals were not specific, but they were aimed at making Chinese socialism more responsive to its people and more responsible for its actions. Each group had a different priority in its list of complaints, but the movement's power came from a basic grass-roots appeal for change.

One key demand of the student hunger strikers was that the government publicly recognize their group as patriotic. If it had, the government would thus have guaranteed that the students would not face imprisonment or worse after they left the square, and would have explicitly

recognized the right of students—and, by implication, workers, bureaucrats, peasants and others—to form organizations independent of the party. The student reformers were not asking for a multiparty democracy. They wanted a multivoiced socialism.

Another demand was that the government negotiate with students on a live TV broadcast. They were demanding freedom of the press, truth in journalism and the right to be heard. The first step toward educating China and the masses on political reform and development is to open up the media to different voices. The students, along with most intellectuals, agree that the monolithic voice of China's state media has buttressed a system in which power is directed from above and is unresponsive to appeals from below. "The *People's Daily* doesn't have to change," said one demonstrating journalist. "We know that it is the voice of the party. Other papers should reflect other voices."

What galvanized the movement into a broad-based rebellion was the students' call to end corruption. China's highly centralized political and economic system is a breeding ground for profiteering, bribery and nepotism. Corruption is so uni-

versal that it touches the life of every Chinese citizen. Yet while all complain, few believe the problem can be solved. Without specifying means, the movement was demanding accountability and punishment for those violating the law.

Many of the student demands were aimed at one basic desire: reform of the legal system. Ironically, China's constitution guarantees freedom of speech, press and assembly. But this paper constitution has little to do with the realpolitik of the streets. The students and their supporters believed that an institutionalized and independent legal system could hold leaders accountable for their actions. Geriatric one-man rule could be checked and various freedoms guaranteed by the constitution could be practiced.

The student movement was trying to open up, modernize and reform China's socialist system from within—to save it before the inevitable failure of the autocracy. In the end, by disappointing the students and violently crushing their movement, the leadership burst the bubble of patriotism.

"We now have practical experience in freedom," said one graduate student, "and we have recognized the illusion of Communism." —A.J.

### Americans loved to love China. It seemed to be moving toward the West, toward more freedom and openness. But...

into great balls of flame, as their People's Liberation Army moved in to take back the city from the people.

As the bullets ricocheted off nearby buildings, a back-alley resident in this neighborhood said quietly, "This is unspeakable. Even when the Japanese invaded in the '30s, it was never this bad. The People's Liberation Army took Beijing in 1949 without a shot. What is happening?"

**When lies become truth:** The carnage had just begun. Many deaths and unspeakable brutality would follow as the tanks and

Continued on page 11



By Joel Bleifuss

## Only the good die young

"I look young. People probably think I'm 38," says '60s radical-turned-party promoter Jerry Rubin. Rubin, who will be 50 next month, recently revealed his secrets to *Longevity* magazine. Besides going "to a lot of doctors and getting a lot of testing done," Rubin says, "I have a macrobiotic chef who comes to my home twice a week. He cooks 12 different dishes, as well as 30 oat bran cookies, and I have one every morning and evening. I haven't had meat or chicken in a long time, and I don't eat anything fried or smoked. I'm not interested in taste—to me, good health tastes good. I drink a lot of distilled water. I also sprinkle vitamin powder on my food, and sometimes I take 20 to 30 supplements a day. I jog about 20 miles a week. In the winter, I go to my health club and do the treadmill and the Stair Master for about two hours at a stretch. I also have the Schwinn Airdyne bike, which moves the arms as well as the legs. I do that about three hours a week. I walk a total of four miles to and from work, plus an extra 10 miles walking on weekends. I lift weights about two to three hours a week, and I go to a class to tighten up stomach muscles."

## La Cage Aux Foley

On June 1 the Republican National Committee (RNC) sent 200 national party leaders a memo titled "Tom Foley, Out Of The Liberal Closet" that compared the new speaker of the House with openly gay Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA). This memo coincided with a call to New York *Daily News* columnist Lars-Erik Nelson from an aide to Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-GA) alleging that Foley is gay. Nelson reports that this unnamed woman, whom he describes as "Gingrich's main aide in his successful crusade against Wright," told him with a giggle, "We hear it's little boys." Although some Republican congressmen voiced their disapproval of the memo, the White House and the RNC were silent. That is, until Frank announced on June 6 that he would release the names of "prominent gay Republicans" in Congress and the White House. Frank told Tom Squitieri and Andrew Miga of the *Boston Herald*, "I think if they don't cut the crap, something might happen, and I'm going to happen it. The right to privacy and the right to hypocrisy do not coexist." Sources told the *Herald* that Frank has said his list would include the names of at least six Republicans. (In a letter to *Time* he fine-tuned that threat: "My reference was only to those gay people who shamefully use the fact or accusation of homosexuality as a weapon against others.") Frank drew a distinction between what he called the "smear" on Foley and leaks from the Justice Department alleging that Rep. William Gray (D-PA) was an object of an FBI investigation. "Those are inaccurate," he said. "I would not be." The day after Frank made his threat, which, incidentally, both the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* chose not to report, President Bush termed the memo "disgusting." RNC Chairman Lee Atwater—who would have the gullible believe he knew nothing—apologized to Foley and Mark Goodwin, RNC communications chairman, took the fall.

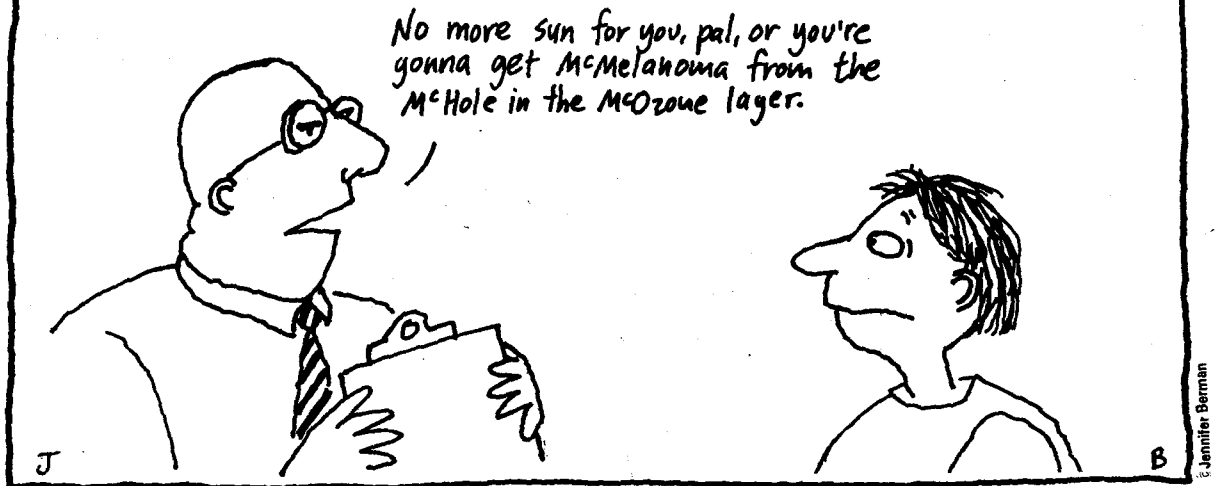
## A minor glitch

Does the U.S. arm itself to the teeth because it perceives the Soviet Union as a real threat? Or was the Cold War a contrived pretext to fill corporate coffers and make every colonel a general? Reading between the lines of a recent article by the *Wall Street Journal's* John Fialka might provide some insight. Fialka writes: "NATO has long recognized that planes from one alliance member could mistakenly be shot down by another NATO country's gunners in wartime; yet in 20 years of trying, the alliance hasn't been able to agree on an electronic system to distinguish NATO planes." According to the Defense Department, the U.S. spends about \$177 billion annually on its 340,000 soldiers deployed in Europe and on U.S.-based forces that are pledged for European deployment in the event of war.

## AP bugaboo

Is the Bush administration as involved in disseminating domestic propaganda as its predecessor? Does the CIA have employees working in the Associated Press (AP) office in Tokyo? Or does the CIA not need to spend its resources on the already pliant mainstream media? These questions beg for answers in light of a June 5 AP story summarizing international reaction to the Beijing massacre. The AP office in Tokyo reported, "Lonely voices of sup-

LIFE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY...



## Good time, create waste at McDonald's

An ill wind blows from McDonaldland. "Archie McPuff," an entity far more dangerous than the Hamburger, threatens to serve America an order of air pollution to go—with the blessing of Mayor McCheese.

Why the cloud of controversy? Archie McPuff is not the latest character in a company advertising campaign, but the name of a proposed mini-incinerator that may someday be found at your neighborhood McDonald's. The multinational burger chain is touting this friendly sounding McCharacter as a solution to the nation's solid waste crisis. But to McPuff's critics it is a fire-breathing menace.

Environmentalists are particularly concerned about what will fuel McPuff's fire. In 1988 McDonald's secured permission from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to build McPuff prototypes behind two of its Chicago-area restaurants. The two McDonald's are licensed to burn their restaurant wastes in the mini-incinerators, including the controversial polystyrene packaging that encases the outflow from McDonald's Kroc-ucopia.

McDonald's press releases maintain that polystyrene "when completely combusted" emits only a harmless cloud of "water, carbon dioxide and trace levels of ash." Brian Lipsett of the Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste (CCHW) in Arlington, Va., calls that claim "misleading and absurd."

In McPuff a variety of materials are haphazardly mixed and burned at the same time. Says Lipsett, "When you incinerate [polystyrene] with other materials [like food, paper

and other plastics] they're all reacting together during the burn." The uneven temperatures that result from this mixed burn produce a wide variety of potentially dangerous chemicals.

A 1987 article in the British journal *Fire and Materials* on polystyrene combustion supports Lipsett's contention. The article, which surveyed 23 studies on polystyrene incineration, found that toxic chemicals were released in all 23 cases. And in 1987 the Center for Fire Research put out a list of 57 chemicals produced by burning polystyrene.

Theresa Freeman is director of Vermonters Organized for Cleanup, a Barre-based group that is spearheading the drive to make Vermont a "foam-free" zone, ridding the state of polystyrene and other styro-trash. Freeman, a longtime foe of McDonald's polystyrene packaging, is opposed to McPuff. But she is worried that the controversy generated by the McPuff program could act as a smoke screen, deflecting attention from the fact that "McDonald's shouldn't be using the foam in the first place."

Although McDonald's no longer uses polystyrene packaging made with ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), Freeman says the polystyrene is far from harmless. According to Freeman, the CFC-substitutes used to manufacture polystyrene produce smog and, in some cases, still possess ozone-depleting properties.

Pentane gas, one of the CFC-substances used as a puffing agent in McDonald's packaging, is notoriously difficult to contain in the manufacturing process. A 1981 study of a Mobil polystyrene plant in Bakersfield, Calif., found that 50 percent of the pentane used there leaked directly into the surrounding

atmosphere. Pentane does not possess the ozone-depleting properties of CFCs, but it does add to ground-level ozone, aggravating the nation's smog problem. "So instead of blowing a hole in the ozone, we blow a hole in our lungs," says CCHW's Lipsett.

Pat Costner, an atmospheric specialist with Greenpeace, says polystyrene packaging is inappropriate whether recycled, buried or burned. Costner notes that as a synthetic polymer, polystyrene cannot be "returned to a state where it has a beneficial role in the biosphere's natural processes." Since it is not biodegradable, polystyrene won't break down in a landfill. And, says Costner, "if it is burned in the same incinerator with a halogen source [like fluorines or chlorines], you may get an extremely toxic dioxin compound."

Linda Fontana, a media relations official at McDonald's suburban Chicago headquarters, discourages "wild speculation" by overeager environmentalists about McDonald's incineration plans. The program, she says, is still in its "very early testing stages." But Shelby Yastrow, McDonald's vice president for the environment, has big plans for McPuff. He told the Topsham-based *Maine Times*, "I'd like to buy an incinerator for every McDonald's restaurant in the country."

The prospect of America's premier fast-food chain's lending credibility to an incineration "solution" troubles environmentalists. The nation's solid waste problem will not be solved by dotting the U.S. with McPuffs. What is needed is a national movement to eliminate excess packaging, accelerate real recycling and fundamentally reassess our pattern of consumption.

—Jim McNeill

## Red and Green solution to auto pollution

FRANKFURT—The Wall Street of West Germany, choked by more and more cars like most European cities, is facing a cure for congestion that, for its scale, is unique in the growing European movement to curb the flood of urban automobiles.

Today in Frankfurt, rush hour traffic crawls at an average 10 or 15 miles per hour. Side streets and sidewalks are jammed with cars parked double or triple at crazy angles. On weekends, the streets again fill up as drivers head to museums and restaurants and to visit friends.

But in the future, according to a coalition of Social Democrats and Greens that captured City Hall on March 12, Frankfurt's center city—a mix of shops, businesses and apart-

ments—will be barred to all commuter and through traffic. The downtown will become a pedestrian promenade, the roads open only for deliveries and residents. In addition, Frankfurt's new city council plans to limit traffic in residential neighborhoods and expand the network of trams, subways, commuter trains and buses.

The city's car-control effort is the most ambitious in Europe to date, but it is not the first. In the recent



past, Rome and Florence have banned rush hour traffic from their historic city centers. Stockholm has introduced street-use tolls. And scores of other cities have begun experimenting with low speed limits, reduced parking slots and complicated traffic layouts that discourage through traffic.

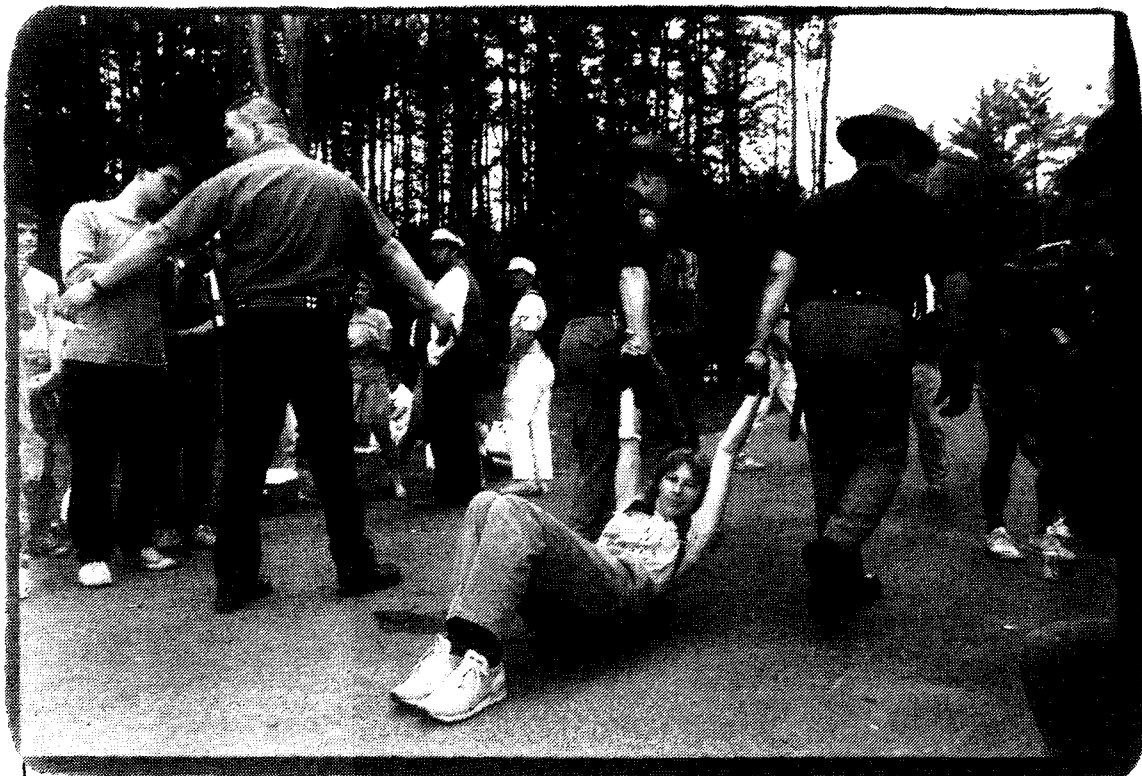
Frankfurt's decision to limit cars, announced in April by the Red-Green coalition that defeated the longtime Christian Democratic government, caused a furor in this country that is just as car-crazed as the U.S.

There are more than 29 million private automobiles in the land of Mercedes, BMW and Volkswagen. With a population of 61 million, this figures out to be 477 cars for every 1,000 inhabitants. Auto industry experts predict that by the year 2000 their number will grow by a third.

The finance capital, Frankfurt not only has the most banks in West Germany—more than 500—it also holds the record ratio of commuters to residents. Every working day about 120,000 cars stream from surrounding towns into this city of 625,000.

Tom Koenigs, the Green who is scheduled to become Frankfurt's city executive in charge of environmental issues come June, says the coalition's "Urbane Center City" project is aimed primarily at cutting carbon monoxide and nitric oxide pollution. Says Koenigs, "In some streets, emission values have risen so high that they exceed the [worker safety] levels permitted in an industrial plant." The second goal, according to Koenigs, is to revive a public street life "without tin," German slang for cars.

—Marcus Kabel



On June 4, 627 people were arrested after climbing the fence at the Seabrook nuclear plant. The New Hampshire facility began testing its nuclear capability last week.

## Seabrook reactions

SEABROOK, N.H. First the wheelchair was handed over the chain-link fence, then its owner, Kathy McGinnis of Portland, Maine, punched the air with both fists before being set down and wheeled by a helper to her arrest a few hundred yards from the south gate of the Seabrook nuclear plant.

McGinnis and 626 others were arrested June 4 at a protest that, though months in the planning, came days before the first atomic reaction at the plant. Due to problems with cooling system valves, the reaction was postponed until June 13. Seabrook got its low-power testing license three weeks ago, after its corporate owners were forced to post a \$72 million bond for the eventual dismantling of the reactor.

Getting its testing license is one of the few concrete steps Seabrook has taken toward operation since the plant was completed in 1986. Seabrook loyalists, including White House chief of staff John Sununu (the former New Hampshire governor), have applauded the licensing. Supporters hope that once nuclear chain reaction takes place, the plant's full-scale operation is inevitable.

The crowd of 3,000 that turned out in front of the plant's gates June 4 wanted to prove them wrong. "Right now, Seabrook belongs to the people. We've taken it back," said organizer Dianne Dunfey, one of the

first protesters over the fences. For hours drums and bells kept up a pulsing beat outside the gates as the crowd cheered on those who stepped over the fence on rough folding ladders.

"This could be another Shoreham," said Grafton Burke, a veteran anti-Seabrook protester. Shoreham, a nuclear power plant on Long Island that probably will be scrapped, got its low-power license four years ago.

Before the final license is granted, Seabrook has to pass a series of hearings and, probably, lawsuits. The plant's biggest stumbling block is evacuation plans, required by federal law, for people within 10 miles of the plant.

Hampton Beach, a popular resort two miles north of the reactor, is swamped by so many beach-goers on summer weekends that there is often a permanent traffic jam on the two-lane highway people would have to take to escape. The beach population is estimated at 100,000 to 250,000. Massachusetts, which has towns within 10 miles of the plant, opposes all evacuation plans. Gov. Michael Dukakis maintains that such plans could not work.

With the exception of Seabrook officials, even plant supporters agree the area cannot be evacuated. "There's no way they can get these people out of here," said Myra Crowley, who lives in a trailer park near Seabrook. "[Because of the tourist

traffic] we can't even get into our houses on weekends."

Watching the protesters from across the street, she said the plant is needed but should have been built elsewhere.

After being carried to school buses and hauled away, most of the protesters were charged with criminal trespassing and released. Dunfey, a protest organizer, was also charged with criminal liability for the conduct of others and parading without a permit.

Clamshell Alliance organizers hoped the action would be the largest protest at the plant since 1,414 were arrested in May 1977. It was. The 627 arrests announced by the Seabrook Police Department do not include scores of children who scaled the fences but couldn't get themselves arrested. The next morning, police made 107 more arrests at the plant's gates as protesters stopped plant employees on their way to work.

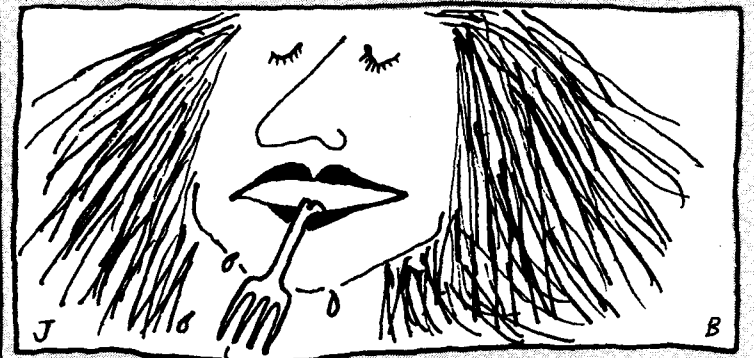
Since the anti-nuclear power movement hit its high-water mark in the '70s, Americans have seen Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and further revelations about that ongoing nuclear accident, the atomic weapons industry. Anti-nukers' predictions have started to come true, but if the Seabrook demonstration is an indicator, that hasn't helped the movement gain in power and support.

—Andrew Galarneau

port for China came from Nicaragua and in an official Vietnamese radio broadcast that said troops in Beijing were attacked by hooligans and ruffians and were justified in fighting back." The problem is that no Nicaraguan official voiced support for the Chinese crackdown. Randolph Ryan, a columnist at the *Boston Globe*, tracked down this nasty bit of disinformation. After talking to AP staff in Tokyo and New York, Ryan reported that "the sentence must have been based on interpretive—and highly selective—readings of [the government paper] *Barricada's* China coverage." Highly selective? Ryan must have meant "highly deceptive." The *Barricada* article cited by AP staff focused on the large number of students killed. It reported that the students were "demanding democratic reforms" and characterized the massacre as "one of the darkest nights in Chinese history." On June 9 Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, in a speech to an international environmental conference in Managua, condemned the Chinese government's violent actions. Yet on June 12 the *Wall Street Journal* passed along the AP misinformation in an editorial. Finally, on June 13 the Associated Press sent out its retraction. But the damage had already been done.

## Chemical agent

An *In These Times* reader found the following story on the bulletin board in the North Dakota Pesticide Program Office at North Dakota State University. *Solutions* magazine reports that the agricultural chemical industry has a friend in John Stossel, the consumer reporter for ABC's *20/20*. Last fall Stossel told a standing room crowd at the National Fertilizer Solutions Association's Round-Up in Indianapolis: "No matter how conscientious you all are, or some of you may be, about being careful, if just one of you makes a mistake and kills a person—or grows an extra eyebrow on someone—that's going to get on the news and set all of you back a long way. It's very, very hard to fight." He went on to blame his liberal fellow reporters for the chemical industry's image problem. "I am more toward the right of people in my business, and I am constantly getting into arguments with people about 'evil businesses' and profits and the other points of view of the young political science students who come into broadcasting." He told his audience, "Part of it's your fault. How often do you see a businessman go onto television and say to that young reporter, 'Yea, well what's so bad about profit, what do you think we do, eat it? No, we reinvest it. We buy that new machine that makes our fertilizer even cheaper for farmers and then your food is cheaper and we employ six more people.'... If you've got a safe product that improves yields a little bit, you're going to have to be very articulate in enforcing your right to keep using it in the future."



## Glue in locks is safer

On June 8 Chrissie Hynde, lead singer with The Pretenders, attended a London press conference to mark the release of the Greenpeace fundraising album *Rainbow Warriors*. Asked what she had done recently to help the environment, Hynde replied, "I firebombed McDonald's." Two days later a firebomb did go off at the McDonald's in Milton Keynes, a town outside of London. To stave off a suit by the international burger chain, Hyndes released this statement: "I am prepared to give an unequivocal undertaking that I will at no time suggest or imply that I have been responsible for firebombing McDonald's or that anyone should firebomb or cause any other physical or personal damage to the customers, employees, franchises or the physical property of McDonald's Restaurants Limited or any of its associated companies anywhere in the world." According to *The Guardian* of London, Hynde, a vegetarian who is concerned about the tropical rain forests that are destroyed to graze the cattle that make fast-food hamburgers, had previously declared that one of her dreams is to put McDonald's out of business.



By Maggie Garb

**C**ITIZENS OF DECATUR, ILL., SPEND MORE than \$500,000 each year on the MX missile system. Decatur's 94,000 population also contributes nearly \$550,000 for Trident submarines and more than \$1.5 million for the Star Wars nuclear defense program. But while paying for Washington's high-cost weapons systems, many Decatur residents are complaining about cuts in federal subsidies to a local hospital and about the lack of funding for badly needed affordable child care.

Although some Decatur residents would link the disappearing social services to Washington's expanding military-industrial complex, it's unlikely that they could back up their comparison with hard numbers. In fact, few Americans can follow the tax dollar trail through the federal budget.

But that may be changing. SANE/Freeze, the grass-roots peace organization that sparked the nuclear freeze campaign in the '70s, is launching a national effort aimed at making Americans aware of how their tax dollars are spent. Called the Peace Economy Project, the project is designed to teach people about the federal budget process and how to research the economic impact of military spending on individual communities.

"Our goal is to help people make the connection between the nuclear arms race and their standard of living," says Tom Golz, until earlier this month the executive director of Illinois SANE/Freeze, one of the first state groups to begin organizing for the project.

**Shifting priorities:** Along with determining local tax contributions to the Pentagon, the project will encourage people to examine local needs. Ira Shorr, the program's national coordinator, argues that halting the arms race takes on new urgency when compared with a failing education system or whatever other social services a community needs. "The question is what are the priorities and what are the choices we should be making," Shorr says.

Spurred by a recent study showing that American attitudes toward foreign and domestic policy have undergone a dramatic shift, SANE/Freeze believes that an understanding of federal spending policy will prompt taxpayers to demand changes in the

## Making the Pentagon end its war on the economy

government's budgetary priorities. The study, conducted by the Washington, D.C.-based Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies, found that the Cold War mentality is disappearing among those surveyed (see *In These Times*, April 26).

Most Americans want to end the arms race with the Soviet Union, the study found. In a

### PEACE PLANS

striking shift of public perceptions of national security threats, survey respondents listed the three "top priority" threats to U.S. security as proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons, global environmental problems and domestic social problems.

But government policies do not reflect the public's attitude. According to the study, most Americans would prefer increased funding for public services to continued military spending. The Peace Economy Project hopes to mobilize such sentiment.

"We want to take the military budget out into our communities," says Golz. "We are finding that people are angry about cuts in social programs, and because of the thaw in the Cold War there is a big shift in the way people are feeling about nuclear war. We have a window of historic opportunity to limit the arms race right now."

**Calculating hometown losses:** Among the information included in the Illinois SANE/Freeze's Peace Economy pamphlet is the mathematical equation by which residents can calculate their town's contribution to Pentagon projects. They can then compare the Pentagon budget to federal spending on housing, public transportation, education or any other social program. With such a report in hand, an individual can become an informed lobbyist.

The campaign, which was developed during the SANE/Freeze National Congress last December, is divided into three phases. The first, running from May to August, focuses on building grass-roots budget coalitions, which can conduct a federal budget impact study. During phase two, July through Sep-

tember, SANE/Freeze members will release a budget impact report to the local media, lobby Congress members and sponsor local education programs. From mid-October to January, project leaders will organize town meetings and invite local, state and federal officials to attend.

Golz predicts that the project's reports will be brought up in next year's budget debate. "The government has a limited amount of resources to spend, and our elected officials set the spending priorities. We want people to discuss these reports with their local politicians and hold them accountable," he says.

"If people do not place the greatest threat to U.S. security as the Soviet Union, then what the hell are we doing with all this military spending? People are going to start asking themselves that," he says.

**The national mood is shifting away from a Cold War mentality and toward concern for domestic needs. A new SANE/Freeze grass-roots initiative is aimed at putting conversion to a postmilitary, socially oriented economy on the American agenda.**

Providing additional fodder for the SANE/Freeze campaign is another study, which was conducted by the Lansing, Mich.-based Employment Research Associates, an independent economic consulting firm. This report, titled "Bankrupting America," found that Pentagon spending drains, rather than supports, the economies of nearly three-quarters of U.S. communities. Of the 435 congressional districts, 321 pay out "hundreds of

millions of dollars more than they take in from military contracts, salaries and facilities," the report found.

When SANE/Freeze saw the report, the group decided to include it in its Peace Economy Project pamphlet, which it has sent to all 240 local SANE/Freeze chapters around the country. "We want to give people an opportunity to see exactly where their tax dollars are going and what their money is doing."

Along with training people to research federal expenditures, SANE/Freeze will help organize coalitions of community groups that have been working on other social issues. "If one group is fighting for child care and another group is fighting for housing, they shouldn't have to struggle against each other for a small piece of the budgetary pie. We're all going to have to struggle to get a large piece of that pie," says Golz.

The Pentagon has long won the largest hunk of the budgetary pie, and in the Reagan years that slice grew dramatically. According to a Department of Defense spokesman, more than 50 percent of all federal income taxes currently go for military expenditures. Between 1982 and 1986—a time when most social programs were seeing funding cuts—military spending increased by nearly 40 percent. SANE/Freeze claims the nuclear arms race costs Americans about \$2,000 per second.

SANE/Freeze is also picking up on the work of Jobs With Peace, a Washington, D.C.-based peace organization that has long argued that military spending slows the domestic economy. SANE/Freeze has compiled statistics to show that the Pentagon creates fewer jobs than almost any other economic sector. According to SANE/Freeze, \$1 billion spent on military hardware creates an average of 48,000 jobs, but that \$1 billion put into public housing would fund 76,000 jobs, and the same billion put into schools would create 100,000 teaching positions.

Armed with this information, SANE/Freeze organizers plan to present their neighbors and friends with the old choice between guns and butter. And if the Roosevelt study is right, most people will choose to cut military spending and increase social spending. Then the challenge will be to force government policy to catch up with the shift in American attitudes and, finally, to elect officials who represent the public's new thinking. □

## Mayoral candidate Giuliani forgets to doff Panama hat

By Daniel Lazare

NEW YORK

**A**S THE POINT MAN IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S anti-urban destabilization campaign, Rudy Giuliani no doubt thought that once he had shaken the New York City power structure to the roots, the mayoralty would fall into his outstretched hand like a ripe fruit. But then the power structure struck back, and suddenly that expectation seems premature.

The turning point came in mid-May when somebody, presumably an operative with the Koch campaign, tipped off the *Daily News* that Giuliani's new law firm was serving as the registered U.S. legal representative for Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega.

While nothing about the relationship was illegal or unethical, it was embarrassing all the same for a holier-than-thou prosecutor who has tried to pass himself off as the personification of virtue in the war on drugs.

The Giuliani campaign flacks scrambled to put the best face on things by issuing a statement to the effect that the firm, White & Case, had done no work for Noriega himself, but only for an "entity" of the Panamanian government; that no work had transpired since Giuliani had joined as a partner in mid-February; and that no work would transpire until the Bush administration and the pro-U.S. opposition in Panama gave the go-ahead. *Newsday's* mildly liberal editorialists tried to dismiss the fracas as so much latter-

day "McCarthyism," while *Newsday* columnist Murray Kempton declared in his characteristically baroque style that since the arrangement with Panama had "been consummated, flourished and passed into wither well before Giuliani joined the firm," he had no grounds for embarrassment.

**Flab flop:** This was liberalism at its flabbiest. The Noriega flap was highly significant

### NEW YORK

for a half-dozen reasons that Giuliani's defenders were desperate to overlook:

- It was dumb. Before joining the firm, Giuliani should have thoroughly checked out White & Case's client list for anything that might pose political trouble. The fact that he didn't shows that he's still an amateur among big-league players.

- The response issued by his campaign was a cynical evasion, precisely the sort of half-truth one would expect of a Thatcher-

worshipping Reaganite (as *Seven Days* magazine recently revealed in a profile of the rampaging ex-prosecutor). Distinguishing between an "entity" of the Panamanian government and the government itself is nonsense in the case of a one-man dictatorship like Noriega's, particularly since White & Case, in a recent federal filing, had itself described its activities as "general legal representation in connection with foreign borrowing and project financing by the Republic and by state-owned entities" (emphasis added). Making a big deal over the fact that no work had been performed in recent months was similarly silly. As any lawyer will attest, what matters is that the attorney-client relationship was ongoing.

- It was highly revealing. Back when he was firing off Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) suits right and left, Giuliani was said to burn with the fire of moral righteousness. Post-Noriega, how-

Continued on page 11



# Black Caucus wins influence, visibility

By Salim Muwakkil

**T**HE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS (CBC) is emerging out of the shadows of the Reagan years with a hardened competence and renewed confidence. The blizzard of support that greeted the CBC's alternative budget proposals in May forced the media to increase its focus on the group's growing influence and no doubt helped convince President George Bush to invite CBC members in for a late May chat. It's been eight years since the CBC's last White House invitation.

The group's "Quality of Life" alternative budget for fiscal year 1990 was supported by a wide variety of organizations—from religious and peace activists to environmentalists and major civil rights groups—who formed a national coalition to help bring more public attention to the proposals. Rep. Ronald Dellums (D-CA), the CBC chair, called the substitute budget "a moral statement of social priorities and a commitment to transform America from a permanent war economy to a peace economy."

The 1990 budget is the CBC's eighth annual such document. The previous seven were also "moral statements" that drew support from progressive groups but attracted little attention in the mainstream. Indeed, the CBC alternative budgets were relegated to the realm of the symbolic during the bleak Reagan years. Yet these documents have offered concrete alternatives to Reaganomics and have maintained a reputation for fiscal rigor. The CBC's 1990 budget proposal, which would have cut defense spending by a total of \$39.1 billion and raised \$25.3 billion in additional revenue for domestic spending by increasing the top marginal tax rates, was aired in the House and allowed full debate by Budget Committee Chairman Leon Panetta (D-CA). It was rejected 81-343.

Although the CBC substitute budget amendment was solidly defeated in the House, it fared better than three others offered as alternatives:

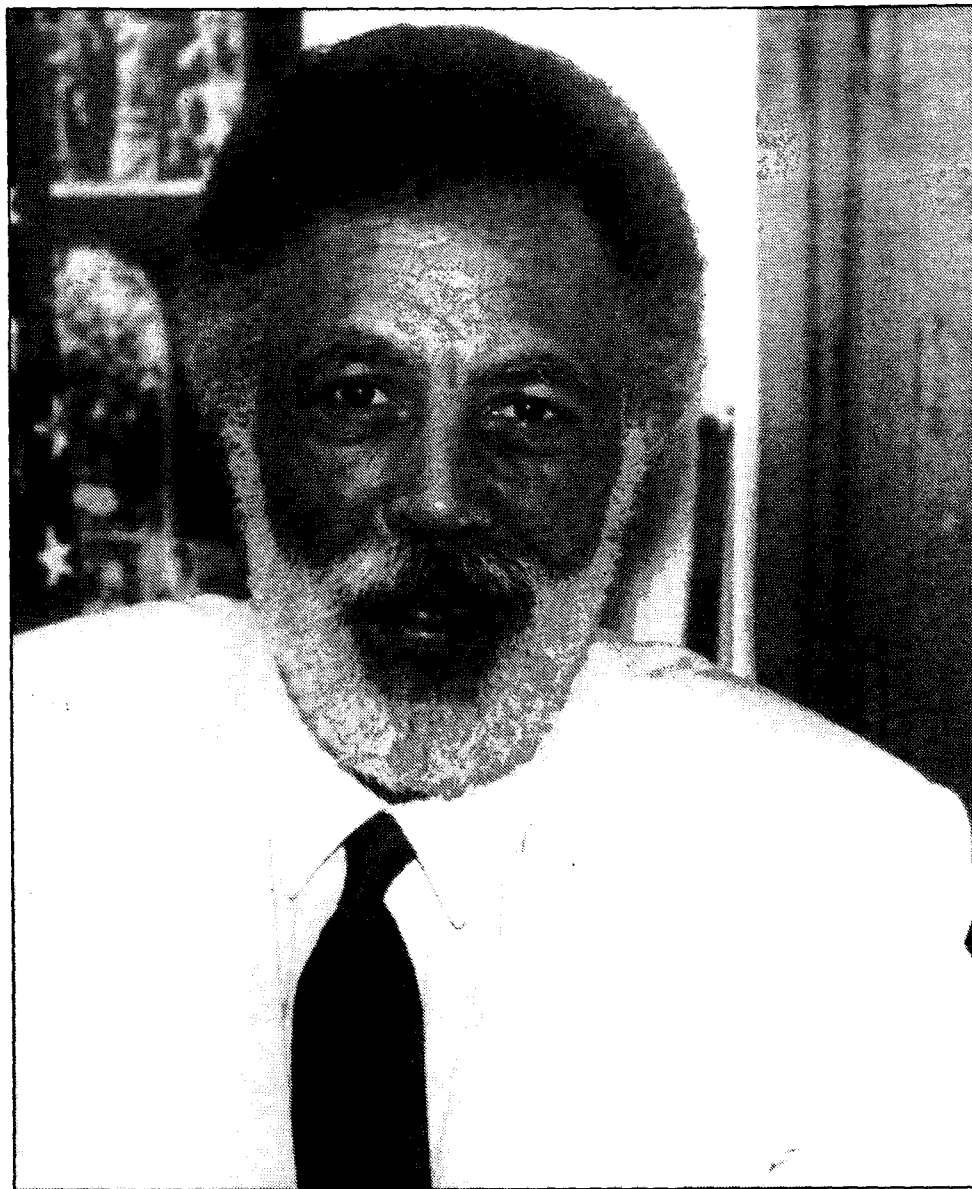
- Rep. Richard Gephardt (D-MO) proposed an amendment to raise revenue for expanded domestic programs and deficit reduction through an oil import fee. It went down 49-373;

- Rep. William Dannemeyer (R-CA) offered a substitute amendment to provide for deficit reduction of \$62 billion through refinancing the federal debt by issuing gold-backed bonds and declaring a tax amnesty. The amendment was rejected 72-350;

- Rep. John Kasich (R-OH) proposed to generate \$8.6 billion in deficit reduction by freezing all discretionary spending and reducing Medicare spending by \$2.7 billion. The defeat was 30-393.

"Because of the wide range of support we received we were much more effective in making the case for the CBC alternative budget during the House debate," explained Dellums aide Max Miller. Dellums, as CBC chair, was the substitute amendment's point man on the House floor.

He told his colleagues the CBC budget "offers an alternative vision of America." It "addresses real human needs and potential by: supporting proven social programs and creating new domestic initiatives; providing for a national defense based not on obsolescent Cold War policies but on evolving inter-



Congressional Black Caucus Chair Ronald Dellums: CBC budget would aim toward a "peace economy."

national realities and constructive proposals for weapons and force reductions; and making substantive progress in budget deficit reduction through true fiscal responsibility and constructive modifications of existing tax codes."

Specifically, the CBC budget would have spent \$41.4 billion more than the administration proposal for non-military spending in

## CONGRESS

1990 and \$168.7 billion more over the three-year budget cycle. It would have cut appropriations for defense by \$17 billion in 1990 and by more than \$76 billion over three years. The CBC budget had the largest deficit reduction figures of all the alternative proposals and meets the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit targets for each of the three budget-cycle years.

**Equalizing taxes:** The CBC proposed to raise the necessary revenue for these ambitious changes by imposing a 10 percent tax surcharge on the highest 10 percent of corporate incomes—"thus 90 percent of all corporate taxpayers are exempt, including virtually all small and minority corporations," Dellums said. And, Dellums said, by imposing a 10 percent individual income tax surcharge for the top 5 percent of all individual taxpayers, "the CBC requires that the highest-income taxpayers pay the same marginal tax rate as lower-income taxpayers." Dellums said this action would remove the "bubble" created in the 1986 Tax Reform Act where high-income taxpayers pay a lower marginal tax rate than lower-income taxpayers.

"The CBC budget makes it clear that a lot of the assumptions about how difficult it would be to reduce the deficit while maintaining national defense are patently false," notes Miller. Indeed, the 18-year-old group's eighth annual substitute budget was a well-crafted document outlining ways this country could invest in its own citizens, jettison jingoism and attempt to accommodate positive geopolitical developments.

"This new direction is necessary since the administration's budget not only fails to reverse the policies and trends of the past eight years, but reinforces them," said Sister Nancy Sylvester, national coordinator for Network, a Catholic lobby and one of many religious and human rights groups that support the CBC budget. Among other groups weighing in on behalf of the CBC budget are SANE/Freeze, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Church Women United, Project Vote, Friends of the Earth, Jobs With Peace, the National Council of Churches and others too numerous to mention in this account.

**Movin' on up:** The increased media focus accorded the CBC budget is due in large part to the group's growing influence. Rep. William Gray (D-PA), for example, is chairman of the House's Democratic Caucus as well as a member of the CBC. The CBC boasts four members who chair standing committees, two who head select committees and 18 who head subcommittees.

"Individual members of the CBC are gaining power, and in some cases their national responsibilities clash with roles as caucus members," explains Linda Williams, senior researcher with the Joint Center for Political Studies, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank

that specializes in African-American issues. As committee chairs, for example, "they must be impartial shepherds of the legislative process, and they just can't ignore other congressmen on their committee from either party. And they won't remain in their position long if they do."

Gray exemplified the dilemma last year while he was still chairman of the House Budget Committee. When the CBC budget came up for a vote on the House floor last year, Gray voted "present" rather than "yea." It's not a "problem of race," Gray told the *Washington Post* at the time. "It's a problem of what happens to any member of Congress who gets elevated to a position of leadership."

Although conflicts about divided loyalties do occasionally arise, by and large CBC members' views are remarkably consonant. The voting patterns of all members rank them high in the ratings of the liberal groups Americans for Democratic Action and the Leadership Conference for Civil Rights. Not surprisingly, CBC members are ranked low by the American Conservative Union and other groups on the right.

**New access:** Caucus members apparently ranked low in the opinion of former President Reagan. He met with them only once,

## Bush shows a very different attitude from Reagan, who met with the caucus only once.

at the very beginning of his eight-year tenure, and never again acknowledged their existence. The Bush administration exhibits a dramatically different attitude.

At the May 22 meeting, Bush and several members of his Cabinet—including Vice President Dan Quayle, Secretary of State James Baker, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack Kemp and Office of Management and Budget Director Richard Darman—engaged in what CBC members said was an open exchange of ideas. Dellums said the CBC presented Bush with proposals to address the country's escalating social problems and issued an urgent request to establish the eradication of poverty as a national imperative and to de-emphasize law enforcement as the primary focus in the war on drugs.

He also raised the issues of sanctions against South Africa, an end to support for the right-wing insurgency in Angola, increased emergency aid to southern Africa and a constructive restructuring of the Third World debt. The Bush administration clearly disagreed with most of the CBC's international positions.

"We have major differences on some of these key issues," Dellums said following the White House meeting. "But, unlike his predecessor, this president is more pragmatic, flexible and willing to listen to countervailing ideas and proposals."

The relationship between the president and African-American political leadership had no way to go but up, and it appears headed in that direction. After the White House gathering, Bush agreed to a schedule of regular meetings where CBC members could offer their analyses and recommendations to him and top officials in his administration on both domestic and international issues. "This is an important first step that I hope will broaden the boundaries of awareness and understanding," Dellums said. □

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The interviews below, with Jozef Kusmierek and Jan Mijzel, two of the keenest and most informed observers of the Polish scene, were conducted for *In These Times* by Alexander Amerisov, editor of the Soviet-American Review. The interviews occurred just prior to the June 4 legislative elections in which Solidarity swept virtually all the offices open to its candidates and inflicted an historically unprecedented rebuke to a ruling Communist Party.

## By Alexander Amerisov

WARSAW, POLAND

**J**OZEF KUSMIEREK IS ONE OF POLAND'S MOST controversial and respected journalists. He has contributed for the last 40 years to both the official and underground Polish press. The material in Kusmierek's articles often becomes the stuff of speeches by government and opposition leaders.

Having fought against the Nazis during World War II as a teenage member of a Communist Party partisan unit, he took part in the final assault on Berlin. His *Attention: Human Beings* was one of the first anti-Stalinist books. It was published in Poland in 1951 during a brief thaw while Stalin was still in power. Kusmierek is the author of half a dozen books, and his latest collection of political plays has just come out here.

Kusmierek spoke with *In These Times* just prior to the June 4 elections in Poland.

**What is your assessment of the Solidarity trade union and its founder, Lech Walesa?**

If the social policies of the Communist Party are moving toward social democracy, then Walesa's policies are closer to those of Mao Zedong—not culturally, but as far as workers' compensation is concerned. It was Walesa who said in 1980 that we all have the same stomachs. It was Walesa who was the initiator of so-called Walesovian pay raises—3,000 zlotys [\$6] for all, regardless of how they worked. To all pleas that it was

# Poland—is Peronism in the offing?

not right, Walesa had only one answer: social justice. I told Walesa in 1980 that I had no time for such nonsense and turned my attention to the question of workers' self-management. Walesa at that time was against the idea of workers' self-management, fearing that it would undermine Solidarity. I explained to him that there are no trade unions in the world that would oppose self-management. Step by step Walesa started to understand this, helped by the fact that the movement for self-management was developing in Poland independent of Solidarity.

I managed to organize workers' self-management at the car factory in Bielsko-Biala. For the three months that the factory operated on this basis, car output went up by 20 percent. All without an increase in raw materials. How come? The workers stopped stealing.

**Could you please elaborate on why you term Walesa's policies Maoist?**

Polish society will never admit it, but it is by its very nature Maoist in the sense that it strives for all-round primitive egalitarianism. And Walesa as a person has a great sense for what the people want.

**If Solidarity is indeed a "Maoist" movement, then the question arises, can it really do anything for Poland?**

Nothing at all. At best it is simply a stage on the path to Polish Peronism. Poles live with illusions. They don't want to face the facts. Poles can hardly imagine that they are moving toward genuine economic catastrophe. To maintain the present standard of living even for an additional year will be impossible. Nobody in Poland wants to admit it. They don't listen to me.

Solidarity is an elite organization that has no mass base. It does have the sympathies of millions, but only because of the people's

hatred for Communists. But this is not positive.

The workers want only pay increases; they don't want to reinvest in the economy. Not one of the strikes during the last year demanded updating the factory equipment—something that is of vital necessity for Poland—only more money for salaries.

Factory managers don't raise the question of spending money on new equipment either, because they are afraid of being accused by higher-ups of subversion.

When you raise such questions with Solidarity officials, the only answer you get is that it can wait because the No. 1 thing now is pluralism.

**Are you telling me that Solidarity has no economic program?**

After reading several of Solidarity's economic programs, I tried to explain that realization of all their plans would require the combined power of Hitler and Stalin and the subsequent imposition on Poland of a superpowerful new state machinery. But none of them wants to understand it.

**What do you expect from the election on June 4?**

I, of course, will vote for Solidarity's candidate in my district, although I don't particularly like him. As for the results of these elections, I expect only one thing—300 per-

## INTERVIEW

cent inflation followed by another round of 300 percent inflation, like in Argentina, and the entire thing ending in a Polish Peronist dictatorship.

**Including Lech Walesa?**

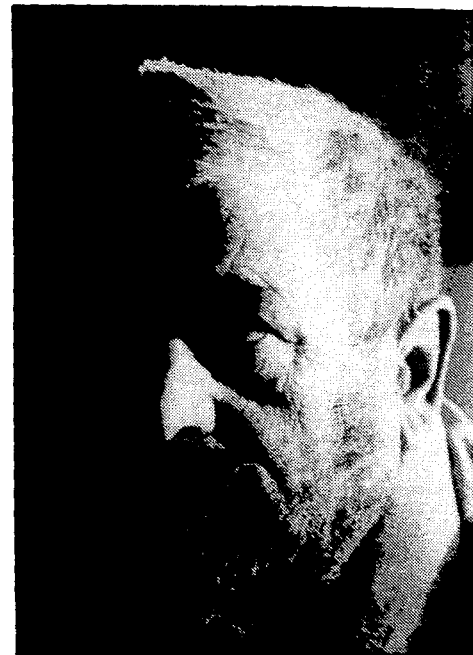
I have not tried to get hold of him recently, as he is harder now to get an audience with than the queen of England. And I don't like to crawl on my stomach.

**Should the West lend more money to Poland?**

The West views the Polish situation in an unreal way—the feeling there is that the situation here is bad but not catastrophic. Many in the West feel that if Poland will get some financial assistance the situation here will improve. It is a fallacy that does not take into consideration Polish reality's most important facet, which is that the workers have no incentive.

Just one example. In 1980, during the peak of Solidarity's influence, one of the chemical factories came to a halt because the phosphates—the raw material for the factory—stopped coming. This lasted for almost a year, and workers while not working were receiving their full wages. They even received the pay increase despite producing nothing at all. Finally the phosphates arrived, and the management called the workers back to work. The workers immediately started to demand wage increases. Their argument was that before they were receiving wages in order not to look for work elsewhere, and now that the factory wants them actually to work they should be paid for it as well.

Another example. A textile factory in Poland is working at 30 percent capacity because there is a shortage of raw materials now. Let's say that Australia will advance Poland credit in the form of wool and the U.S. will advance credit in the form of cotton. As a result, people working there will have to work a full eight-hour day. You can bet



Journalist Jozef Kusmierek

that the first thing people will do will be to demand pay increases of several hundred percent. For three hours of work, they'd say, you paid us so much—now that we have to work eight hours a day, pay us three times more.

The socialism that was built in Poland suited the Polish mentality very well. It satisfied the poetic and never-ending Polish demand for so-called social justice.

Try to understand that in our country there was never a genuine capitalism of the Western type. As a result, a genuine working class never developed here—a class of well-paid, skilled workers. We never really had farmers, but only peasants just a notch above Russia's peasantry in their personal independence from the state. Poland basically was always a country of the lumpenproletariat, told by Communists that they were the elephant holding up the nation. Instead of telling the workers that they had to work hard to have an apartment, the Communists told them they could have these apartments for free as long as they were politically loyal and had some patience.

[Currently the normal wait for a state-provided apartment in Warsaw is something like 30 years. To buy an apartment privately is impossible for the vast majority. A 600-square-foot apartment in Warsaw is going now for something like \$25,000 in a country with an average monthly wage of \$20. Only by engaging in black-market trading or working abroad can Poles hope to buy an apartment.]

It is this state-provided housing that is the No. 1 cause of destruction of the Polish economy. It has also destroyed the moral fabric of the nation and turned Poland into a nation of people constantly on the lookout for something for nothing.

There is no economic system in the world that could be giving away apartments to people free of charge, other than, let's say, Kuwait, without accruing great harm to itself.

During 1980 the first demand of Solidarity was that the state increase public housing construction fivefold. It would have totally bankrupted the nation. Now Alfred Miodowicz, the leader of the pro-Communist Party trade unions, and, to a lesser extent, Walesa have come back to the subject.

Right after the round-table discussion between Solidarity and the government last April, which paved the way for the coming elections, I was interviewed by Polish-lan-

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A monthly newsletter by Alexander Amerisov

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guage radio stations in Sydney, Australia, and Chicago. They told me that they are organizing a drive to deliver corn to Poland. I told them that I just came back from a corn market and that Polish farmers can deliver a ton of corn for \$30 in virtually unlimited quantities. Could America or Australia match this price? They can't. Poland has a surplus of food for consumption and raw materials for industry and can produce much more. What Poland requires is dramatic internal change, not foreign aid.

In one of my last conversations with Walesa, he asked me—modestly—if I did not think that if he went to America, the latter, on the strength of his personality, would cancel Polish debt. I tried to explain to him that Polish debt is of little concern to the U.S. Polish debt is Gorbachov's problem, not James Baker's. Polish debt is an ace for Bush against Gorbachov. Why should America give Walesa cards with which Gorbachov will be playing?

But Solidarity thinks that the U.S. has only one interest—Poland. As Walesa is under

illusions that he can convince the West to cancel Polish debt, so is Prime Minister Mieczyslaw Rakowski under the illusion that Walesa will protect him against strikes. Walesa is honest and true to his word. He will do his best to fulfill his promises to Rakowski. And this is precisely the reason why Walesa will be thrown out as the head of Solidarity at Solidarity's congress in October.

**On what do you base such a dire prediction?**

I have come to this conclusion on the basis of numerous conversations with my many contacts within Solidarity who are active outside of Warsaw.

**Are you telling me that there is a plot being hatched within Solidarity against Lech Walesa?**

Apart from a group of "fundamentalists" in Solidarity in Warsaw who are extremely loyal to Walesa, consisting largely of Warsaw-based intellectuals, he is strongly disliked by what I'd call the activist core of Solidarity based in the provinces. They think that

Walesa lacks sufficient militancy and that if he'd shown a bit more of it in 1981, Communism in Poland would have been long abolished.

As Walesa grew in popularity, so with him grew the popularity of many local Solidarity leaders. The latter have received a big boost in popularity during the round of strikes unsanctioned by Walesa last August. Also, it was these strikes that pushed the government to talk to Walesa. Many of these militant leaders feel ignored now that they are not candidates for parliament.

As the economy deteriorates further and silly government propaganda continues, all the society's problems will be blamed on Walesa, and not on Rakowski.

**But if Walesa is removed, it seems to me that Solidarity will fall apart. I don't see anyone in Solidarity today who could take Walesa's place.**

The government realizes it too. That is the reason the governments wants Solidarity to do well in the elections and wants Solidarity to obtain its full share of allotted places. It

is easier for the government to manage one Solidarity than hundreds of independent and militant unions, into which Solidarity would disintegrate.

When there is no more Walesa and Solidarity loses its current importance, a very strong Catholic party will emerge. This Catholic party will help the Communist establishment to reorganize the economy into a Polish type of degenerated capitalism in the name of social peace and justice. Classical capitalism is not possible in Poland. A weird combination of state-private enterprises and cooperatives will be the essence of the new system. This new Catholic party will sponsor new enterprises within which the Catholic party will establish its own nomenclature.

**And will this Communist-Christian combination solve Poland's economic problems?**

In no way. At the end there will be a dictatorship of the Peronist type: exchange of money, freezing of wages and possibly of prices—in a word, a "normal" Peronist type of dictatorship. □

## The companies that communists keep

By Alexander Amerisov

WARSAW, POLAND

**J**AN MUJZEL IS A HIGHLY RESPECTED POLITICAL economist—the former head of Poland's main economic planning institute and one of the 12 members of Solidarity's economic advisory council.

**Does Solidarity have an economic program?**

Solidarity is a very broad social movement and inside it there are various political currents—conservative, liberal, Christian democratic and social democratic. The group developing Solidarity's economic program, of which I was a part, was headed by Professor Witold Trzeciakowski. Before starting the round-table talks with the government we already had some clearly articulated principles as our guides. First of all, we wanted fundamental changes in economic structures away from reliance on heavy industry and toward newer progressive technologies—a difficult task requiring a large-scale shift in employment.

The Polish economic tragedy is that an enormous amount of money borrowed from the West during the '70s was not used to restructure the economy, but was reinvested in traditional areas of heavy industry to satisfy political needs of the moment.

**All plans of economic restructuring that I have seen inevitably will lead, if implemented, to a dramatic reduction of the number of workers in mining, steel and traditional chemical industries—a very painful process, as restructuring in America's Rust Belt has demonstrated. In the U.S. this restructuring was possible only through an all-out attack on the workers' standard of living and a pursuit of policies aimed to undermine their trade unions. Can Solidarity, as a trade union, really accept such recipes, which will result in its weakening?**

It is an extremely difficult problem, but we have to do it, because there is absolutely no choice. We can't overcome the weaknesses of the Polish economy without solving this problem.

**I understand that these problems must be overcome. The question, however, is whether Solidarity, as a trade union, can tackle them. I have talked to several people**

**here, including several Western businessmen, and they believe that inflation will skyrocket, that Solidarity will not be able to keep Polish workers in line, that the latter will intensify their strikes, that Lech Walesa will come under very strong pressure to resign or change his policies.**

Such a possibility cannot be excluded. But it seems to me that a trade union with such a highly developed social conscience as Solidarity will understand that without guarantees of providing the economy with efficient lines of development all of these trade-unionist goals are beyond reach, because the economy will go down and the standard of living will drop further and nobody will be able to stop it. Knowing that, it seems to me that Solidarity will try to convince its supporters to accept the painful measures.

**I have talked to some political observers here, including Jozef Kusmieriek, who told me that the Solidarity-Communist accord will fail and that some time in the future it will be replaced by collaboration between Communists and Catholic Christian democrats.**

I have the highest respect for Mr. Kusmieriek, and I probably would agree with him in such a position. It seems to me that the role played now by Solidarity in negotiating the nation's policies was imposed on it. There is no one else in Polish society who could perform such a task, to put pressure on the Communists to move in the needed direction. Solidarity, as you may know, also wants to develop the democratic political institutions in Poland. By that we mean the creation of conditions for the existence of various political parties, including those of Christian democratic and social democratic orientation.

These parties still have to be formed, but eventually they will absorb the responsibilities for providing the political skeleton of Polish society. But at this time we have no institutions powerful enough to perform the role played by Solidarity. Solidarity is today, in fact, much more than a trade union. Thus it has to consider not only strictly trade union needs, but also those of the nation as a whole. We think that during the next four years—a transitional period—political parties will be created. The law on associations

is in the final stage of completion. As a result, the natural question arises if Solidarity will be really needed in its present form. My personal belief is that Solidarity will continue to exist as a trade union after various political parties are formed. Moreover, these parties will in all probability be formed to a great extent by people who are active now with Solidarity.

**Given the fervently anti-Communist mood of Polish society, what do you think will happen to the Polish Communist Party?**

Well, Polish society is giving the Communist Party these four years as a grace period, and

### INTERVIEW

the Communist Party has to develop a new program and a new line of thinking. They're claiming that they have some very promising possibilities in this field, that they are developing very strong intellectual potential and have acquired groups of people with



Political economist Jan Mujzel

bright minds. They say they will be able to come up with new ideas and proposals that will capture a large segment of Polish society in democratic competition.

**Did they tell you what those ideas might be?**

Well, at least those people who are running the party now and are on its liberal wing are talking about some switch toward social democratic positions similar to Swedish socialists. To what extent it would be possible for the Communist Party to do this, given its social base, its past and its lack of credibility with society, remains to be seen.

**But how can the Communist Party talk about the switch to social democratic positions when it itself performs the function of a capitalist class here? There is no capitalist elite in Poland in relation to which the Communist Party could play the role of permanent opposition. First, such an elite must be created.**

That's a very good question. Speaking frankly, all these problems connected with the transitional period are the most difficult, because there is no theoretical paradigm for this phenomenon anywhere.

Indeed, the apparatus of the Communist Party and its functions can be in some way compared to the position and functions of capital owners in Western societies. It is true, for example, that the Communists regard the national assets as their personal property. And now, when society is in a transitional period and everybody is for changing the ownership relations, there are various attempts—some of them very successful—in changing ownership in such a way as to give members of the Communist nomenclature good positions in the future economy.

**Could you give an example, please?**

In Poland we have had for the last two to three years so-called joint stock companies. They became very popular as a path to personal enrichment for the politically well-connected. The popularity of these companies with the establishment lies in the fact that they represent in many ways a device for transformation of state-owned companies into companies owned by the Communist elite. The members of the Communist Party are pushing in that direction.

It could be that they would have gone much further already, but had not been for very strong resistance on the part of workers' self-management institutions, in particular those who are controlled by Solidarity activists. Several times already these attempts by Communists to privatize the state companies were stopped by such resistance. Nevertheless, the Communist Party is pushing hard in that direction, using the arguments of efficiency. □

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# For Germans, the Soviet question finds answers

By Diana Johnstone

BONN, WEST GERMANY

**T**HE ONLY SURPRISE TO MIKHAIL GORBACHOV's trip to West Germany was that there were no surprises. With as friendly a foreign audience as he has ever played to, the Soviet president made it clear that he is not a showman pulling rabbits from hats, but a sober statesman building for the long haul.

All recent polls confirm that West Germans by far prefer Gorbachov to all other world leaders. And why not? Suggestions that "Gorbimania" may seduce the Germans away from the Western alliance reveal a nagging worry in NATO circles that without Cold War hostilities to divide them, Germans and Russians will return to traditional historical patterns of close cooperation.

The desire for such a return exists on both sides. But the Gorbachov visit served to remind both Germans and Russians, as well as their uneasy allies, that this may take a long time.

Some Gorbachov fans were expecting a sensational new proposal from their hero—a new disarmament offer, perhaps, or something on Berlin or "the German question." Instead, the message was that German-Soviet relations could go very far indeed, but without any sudden leaps upsetting their existing alliance commitments. The main political event of the visit was a "Joint Declaration" carefully worked out in advance by Soviet and West German diplomats. It was the first time Soviet and Western leaders made such an effort to sum up their areas of agreement on principle.

They found a lot to agree about, ranging from "intensive ecological cooperation" to the fight against international terrorism. The strongest point of convergence was rejection of war and even of "any hankering after military superiority. War must no longer be a political instrument," the Bonn statement said. "All wars, whether nuclear or conventional, must be prevented." Europe "must set the world an example of stable peace" and good-neighborly cooperation between countries "despite their different social systems."

There was no reason for Uncle Sam to be jealous. The Joint Statement called for "a peaceful European order for a common European home—in which the United States and Canada also have their place."

Great efforts were made to calm the suspicion of the Atlantic allies. Soviet spokesmen specifically refuted the habitual Western accusation—considered self-evident by those who make it—that Moscow is trying to "detach West Germany from NATO" or "drive a wedge" between the U.S. and its European allies. What Gorbachov really wants from the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) is help in integrating the Soviet economy into the world economy.

Gorbachov pointed out that, because of World War II, there are more difficulties in relations with Germany than with other countries. But economic ties developed "even when things looked absolutely bleak in other areas," Gorbachov recalled. "This was due to centuries-old traditions, the great experience Germans gained in the past in trading with us and finally to the fact that our two economies complement each other," he said.

At a dinner given by FRG President Richard von Weizsäcker, Gorbachov raised another common concern: the astonishingly rapid deterioration of the environment. "The planet's health has already been undermined, and that too is our common misfortune," he said. "It is estimated that to meet the elementary needs of the people in the poorest countries, the world community must expand production 12 to 15 times over the present level. But will the already wounded environment be able to sustain such a huge load? And yet, should we continue to put up with

## EUROPE

pockets of hunger, epidemics and abject poverty? We see in that another urgent reminder of the need to reallocate resources now spent on military confrontation and the arms race to the needs of the economy and of development."

**Pacts Europa:** The Soviet leader saw "a promising trend gaining momentum" toward realizing "the positive heritage of our two nations' centuries-old relationship and their traditions of powerful mutual influence. We want to move forward toward a new relationship. But that would hardly be possible if we

## Moscow wants German help in integrating the Soviet economy into the world economy.

ignore the realities embodied in treaties and agreements." A "high level of Soviet-West German relations" does not clash with anyone's interests, he said. "Indeed, our cooperation can be a catalyst for new relations between the East and the West." Each country "remains loyal to alliance obligations so long as they serve the cause of stability in Europe."

Soviet concern for carrying through far-reaching changes while maintaining "stability" was being dramatically illustrated by bloody ethnic clashes in Uzbekistan, which caused Gorbachov to cut back his official program in West Germany in order to keep in touch with the situation back home. His multiple troubles—including industrial and natural disasters—seem only to have increased the sympathy he inspires among Germans, who admire his pluck and wish him well. China's economic reforms without democracy having led to tragedy, Gorbachov's effort to put democracy first seems foresighted if risky. Economic reform is necessarily but dangerously slow.

The short-term easy way for Gorbachov would be to use the credit line already opened by Bonn to offer his people a pleasant flood of consumer goods. But this would cause inflation and impede the necessary restructuring of Soviet production. West German Social Democratic expert Egon Bahr praised Gorbachov for "having the nerve to say he'll use the money for production. That takes time. They don't need credits, they need efficiency," Bahr said.

While in Bonn, the Soviets signed 11 accords with the Germans in addition to the

Joint Declaration. Two are considered especially important for future business. One is an investment promotion and protection agreement, guaranteeing unrestricted free transfer of capital and earnings and providing for compensation in the event of expropriation. The other is an accord for training Soviet managerial personnel in German methods of doing business.

"Freedom doesn't need to be learned, but business does," commented FRG Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher's collaborator Irmgard Adam-Schwaetzer, calling the training of Soviet managers most important. If they are going to set up more joint ventures in the USSR (so far there are 72), the Germans need to be able to hire skilled local talent.

Other accords included various sorts of cultural exchanges, installation of a "hot line" between Bonn and the Kremlin, agreements to combat drug abuse and a unique program for German training of Soviet specialists in the fields of work safety and vocational rehabilitation of the disabled.

A navigational accord was held up, because no agreement was reached on how to flag West Berlin river boats. The status of West Berlin is a long-standing snag in FRG-USSR relations. Here as elsewhere, the Soviet position remains firm commitment to post-war treaties—in the case of Berlin, the 1972 Four Power Allied Agreement between the U.S., Britain, France and the USSR. Bonn's desire to gain official recognition for West Berlin as part of the FRG remains frustrated.

References to the "German question" can be found only by reading between the lines of the Joint Declaration—and here, each side will read what it wants. The agreement says that a peaceful Europe requires "unqualified respect for the integrity and security of every state," as well as "the right of peoples to self-determination." This can mean the right of the German Democratic Republic to remain separate from the FRG, or the right of East Germans to exercise a "self-determination" meaning something else. History will tell the tale.

**Fading images:** Writing in *Der Spiegel* on the eve of the Gorbachov visit, the top Russian expert on Germany, Nikolai Portugalov, said that the FRG had been the Soviet Union's most important trade partner in the West ever since the 1972 Moscow treaty between Leonid Brezhnev and Willy Brandt. But there was "no political partnership." The West Germans kept their "frozen enemy image" of the Soviet Union, while, "for our part, we tended unchanged to see only the potential revanchist forces." Portugalov acknowledged that "we bear our part of responsibility" in the failure of the political detente of the '70s, which was not bolstered by the military detente alone able to make it irreversible.

Changes in Soviet foreign policy "have led to an astonishingly rapid fading of the Soviet enemy image among West Germans," Portugalov observed. At the same time, the Soviet view of the West German role in Europe has also changed. "The time has come for the political philosophy of the Moscow Treaty to be realized," he said, predicting that Gorbachov's visit would mark a step toward "real confidence between our countries and peoples, untroubled by suspicions."

"The history of Russian-German and Soviet-German relations has known many examples of such trust: in the times of Peter the Great it approached a symbiosis in many fields of life," he recalled.

"Hitler's war of annihilation destroyed this vital mutual trust, seemingly forever. Today

good chances exist that it cannot only sprout again but become a constant of European development." Now, he said, "we want to learn market economy, what to do with mixed property forms in a socialist country. Under Peter the Great, the Germans taught us to do business. *Perestroika* is at least as important as Peter's reforms were. Only today we don't need to start from scratch. Resources, a highly qualified work force, the scientific potential of a great power—we have all that."

Portugalov said it was up to "the patience and far-sightedness of German investors" just how far they leave behind their potential competitors on Soviet markets. The general reply of German business to this enthusiastic invitation is that they are in business to make money, and it will be a while before the Soviet market shapes up to their requirements.

In Cologne, Gorbachov prodded timid entrepreneurs with some ideas of his own. Lauding the "immense Soviet scientific potential," he called on German business to help overcome the lag in practical applications. He suggested they might "place orders with our research institutions," find uses for Soviet space technology, pull the northern German shipyards out of their slump by joining forces with Soviet shipbuilders in rebuilding the Soviet merchant fleet and help develop the Kola peninsula, among other things.

There were some difficulties, he admitted, due to the coexistence of two economic systems in the Soviet Union—the old administrative command system and "a fledgling socialist market system." The transition takes time, "but we shall persevere along the road toward economic democracy in a new form of socialism." The visionary Soviet leader exhorted the German capitalists to think and to offer "strategic projects rather than trifling ventures."

The high point was saved for the last, when Gorbachov was received by steelworkers and their labor representatives on the board of Hoesch in Dortmund, in the heart of the industrial Ruhr. Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt and other top leaders of the Social Democratic Party were there. "The people here are politically engaged, critical and successful achievers," the German labor host told Gorbachov, who is surely eager to cultivate such a combination of qualities at home.

The mood of historic expectation inspired Gorbachov to his most eloquent speech. He denied that *perestroika* meant abandoning socialism, which is only in its historic infancy. The goal is a new democratic socialism worthy of the 21st century. He recalled Soviet admiration for the German working class and thanked the German people for their response to his invitation to "build a better world together."

Gorbachov called West Germany living proof that real power in today's world stems not from aggression and expansionism but from concentration of people's energy and intellectual potential on creative tasks. "The basis of any society is people's work," he concluded.

After recalling the hard and sometimes tragic times of the Soviet Union since the revolution, Gorbachov paid tribute to those who had contributed to the process of reconciliation leading up to his successful visit, starting with Willy Brandt. The old Social Democratic leader covered his face with his hand to hide his emotion.

This reminder of continuity also offered the clearest glimpse of the Europe of the future promised by a new Soviet-German friendship.



# China

Continued from page 3

troops cleaned up the square and chased onlookers away with gunfire and terror. Then the propaganda machine revved up, making lies into truth and turning history on its head.

In the first days after the assault it was unclear who was in charge, what would happen next and what it all meant. An epidemic of rumors gripped the city: Deng Xiaoping was dead... there had been an assassination attempt against Li Peng... the 27th Army was responsible for the bloody assault and other army units were massing outside the city to fight the 27th and to protect the people of Beijing. In retrospect it seems likely that the rumors were carefully planted to keep the citizens of Beijing on edge and to keep reporters mystified and confused.

After the Saturday night massacre, Beijing residents were numb and horrified. But by the time other army units moved in to replace the tired assault troops of the 27th, the people of Beijing welcomed them. They saw them as protectors of the city, friends of the people. "At least they haven't killed anybody," one young man told *In These Times*.

The city was like a child who, after being brutally beaten by her father, crawls into his lap to beg forgiveness and ask for protection. The psychology was understandable, the psychosis palpable.

The most astounding consequence of the assault on Beijing is that, according to the people of Beijing and their government, the event never happened. History is being brazenly rewritten in China, with the compliance of the once-rebellious masses, through the formidable terror of the police state.

Some Beijing residents laugh if you try to question them about the events of 10 days

ago. "Nothing happened!" they say, smiling, and wave you away. Others, pressed further, say they know in their hearts what happened, but will never speak the truth with their mouths.

In Fuxingmen—where the troops plowed through the people to reach Tiananmen Square—people say things like, "I heard nothing on Saturday night, I was watching TV." A man with a bullet wound in his shoulder chases you away if you try to question him. Another man, whose 26-year-old wife died, says it was her own fault for breaking martial law.

The culprits of Saturday night, indeed of the entire democratic movement, were "hooligans," "ruffians" and "counterrevolutionary elements," the government informed the people. After a few days of prudent silence, Chinese hard-line leaders Deng Xiaoping, Li Peng and Qiao Shi stepped forward to take credit for putting down the "counter-revolutionary turmoil" and to congratulate the People's Liberation Army for a job well done.

Of course, none of this has consoled the people of Beijing. They remain terrified. Those who have not been killed, arrested or investigated are retreating into the only safety they know—acceptance of government lies. For days now the propaganda machine has relentlessly driven home "the truth" of the *fangeming baoluan*, or "counter-revolutionary turmoil," the phrase a new mantra of simplistic propagandists. Each night long parades of hooligans who participated in demonstrations against the government are shown, handcuffed and beaten, on Chinese television.

The government has even begun to use the Western media against its citizenry. On its June 10 broadcast Central Chinese Television aired more than one minute of raw

footage from an ABC man-on-the-street interview. The man interviewed was outraged by the killings, describing in detail various atrocities committed by the 27th Army. The Chinese government had pirated the footage from a satellite feed from Tokyo to New York and then aired it in China with an announcement that anyone seeing this "rumor-monger" should report him to the nearest public security bureau.

The following evening, the man, a 42-year-old accountant named Xiao Bin, was shown under arrest, confessing to his counterrevolutionary crimes, begging forgiveness from the party, his father, his children.

This man's story had a devastating effect on the morale of Western journalists working in Beijing. We had believed we were doing a service to the Chinese people by continuing to report on the crackdown, by doing what the Chinese people kept asking us to do: let the world know what was happening. But it turned out that we were helping the Chinese secret police locate their society's malcontents.

As *In These Times* went to press at least 1,000 people had been rounded up, beaten and imprisoned because of their outspokenness and their participation in the demonstrations for freedom and democracy. Thousands of intellectuals and students had fled Beijing for refuge in the countryside, praying they can stay hidden until the madness has moderated. Most plan to leave the country as soon as they are able.

**Surreal square:** Tanks currently line the front entrance to the Forbidden City, while armed troops and coils of sharp wire surround it on all sides. The people's square is now a calm armed camp.

For the few foreigners still living in Beijing, a long period of isolation from the Chinese now begins. Chinese friends are code-named so they will remain unidentified if their conversations are overheard. Friends' phone numbers are torn up into little pieces and rewritten elsewhere in a way that reveals nothing. No one tries to make contact with anybody else right now. It is too dangerous. Spies are everywhere. This is not paranoia; this is real.

The Great Wall has symbolized Chinese insularity for centuries. The current leadership, like their imperial predecessors, still lock arms and look only inward for means, methods and justifications for complete political authority. They are the traditionalists, the old guard, the guardians of Chinese harmony. They have never cared much for the concerns of the outside world and, while giving lip service to the platitudes of international accord, their first concern is to pacify their own Middle Kingdom. The barbarians—those living outside of the Wall—will be dealt with later.

The Chinese language holds an infinite number of clues about the nation's state of mind. As a student of Chinese long ago, I was confused about their terms for time. The word for "the day before yesterday," for instance, can be literally translated to mean "front day," while the word for "the day after tomorrow" can be translated as "back day."

I asked a Chinese friend, a poet, to explain this seeming reversal of meanings. "That's easy to understand," he answered, laughing. "The Chinese are facing the past and walking backward into the future." □

Alisa Joyce writes regularly about Asian affairs.

# Giuliani

Continued from page 6

ever, it's apparent that only the flames of personal ambition now make him sweat. Why condemn Koch as "an embarrassment to New York," as he did in his initial furious reaction to the Noriega flap, when he had gone out of his way to praise him a few weeks earlier? Could it be that Giuliani is the nasty, vindictive government hit man that defense attorneys have been complaining about for years?

• It was hypocritical. The public is used to ambitious prosecutors who graduate to earning fat fees defending mafia kingpins, but not high-flown moralists who lie down, even one step removed, with cocaine dictators. More than a hyperactive prosecutor, Giuliani from 1983 to 1989 was a crusader who rode into the heart of what Newt Gingrich calls "the corrupt liberal welfare state" and promised his sponsors in Washington to clean it up. Now he turns out to be a little corrupt himself, which is reassuring to those who are suspicious of plaster saints.

• It gave the lie to the war on drugs. From the moment he joined the Reagan administration in April 1981, Giuliani has been a leading proponent of drug interdiction. While skeptics argued that AWACs, high-speed Coast Guard cruisers and the like would be ineffective against a sea of drugs, he argued repeatedly that the only thing needed was more hardware, agents and guns, plus the will (as in "triumph of") to use them. Since then, the skeptics have been proven right. Hard drugs like cocaine are abundant, while soft drugs like marijuana, more vulnerable

to the interdiction effort, have grown prohibitively expensive. Meanwhile, there's no shortage of lawyers, lobbyists, agents-of-influence, etc., to do the drug magnates' bidding. Whether it's money, drugs or political influence, the borders tend to be porous. Recently Giuliani proposed stricter laws to confiscate drug assets. How about the drug profits coursing through the veins of White & Case?

• It's wonderfully ironic. For years, the Reaganauts have set out to destabilize New York and other big cities much as they set out to destabilize Panama in 1988. First, they deprived them of federal aid. Then they hit them with macro-economic policies designed to fuel drugs, crime and homelessness. Finally, they bombarded them with investigations and indictments for failing to live up to the Reagan administration's lofty democratic standards. In New York, while ideologically disoriented liberals cheered from the sidelines, Giuliani demonstrated his utter ruthlessness by wiring a mentally unstable young woman (Sukhreet Gabel) to gather surreptitious evidence against her own mother, a state judge said to be in collusion with Bess Myerson, a close associate of Koch.

But it didn't work. As with Panama, Cuba, Nicaragua, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, etc., the destabilization effort seems to have fallen short. Not only was Myerson acquitted, but New York City's Democratic power structure, tired, corrupt, and reactionary though it may be, still stands, while the Giuliani juggernaut has momentarily run out of steam. Half a cheer, anyone, for Tammany Hall? □

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# NOT WIMPING OUT

After 12 hard years as head of the Machinists union, William Winpisinger is still raising hell.

By David Moberg

WASHINGTON

**R**IGHT FROM THE START WILLIAM WINPISINGER made it clear he wanted change. Upon being installed as president of the Machinists union in 1977, "Wimpy" called a midnight meeting of the union's staff to underscore his determination to start a new course.

Soon he was rattling the hidebound leadership of the labor movement with his calls for conservative octogenarian George Meany to step down as president of the AFL-CIO. He raised eyebrows with his denunciations of the emerging "corporate state" in America and his support for democratic socialism. He surprised even some of his colleagues at the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) by forcefully opposing the B-1 bomber, supporting the nuclear freeze and proposing deep cuts in military spending—even at local IAM meetings of defense and aerospace workers.

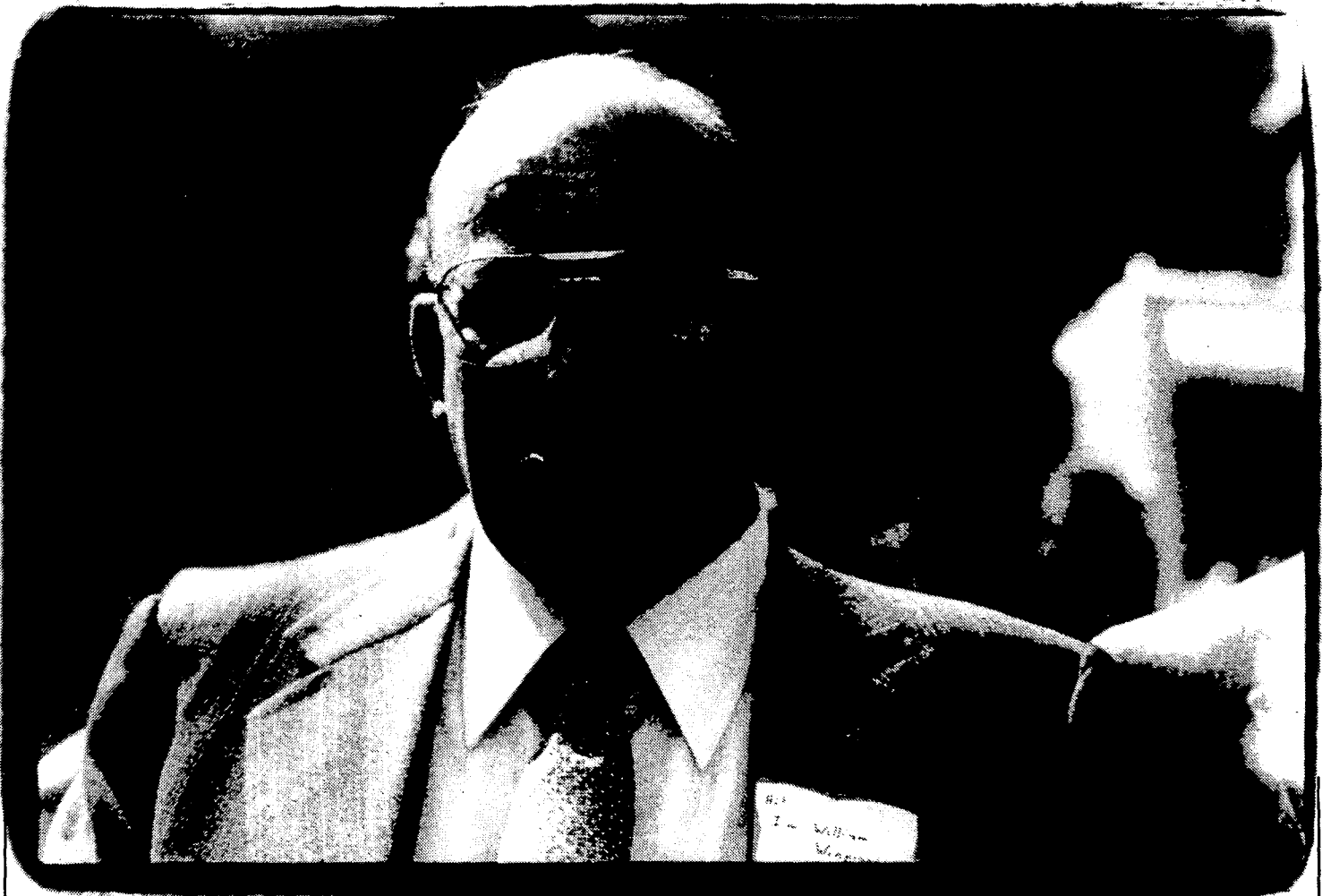
Wimpy came on strong. To friends, he was a fresh wind in a stifled labor movement; to the conservative union establishment, he was a bag of dangerous hot air.

At the end of this month, the 64-year-old Winpisinger is retiring after 12 years as Machinists president. His outspokenness and innovation have continued, but in recent years some of the fire has subsided. Frustrated, even "depressed," by a long, often losing battle against political conservatism, deindustrialization and corporate power, he acknowledges, "I haven't presided over this union during times when you could say there were big victories. Mainly we were on defense."

Despite the disappointments of a shrinking union and a rightward shift in national politics—and despite his precarious perch on labor's left wing—he has had as much influence on the shape of the labor movement as any other leader of recent times. Detractors can fault him on a number of points, but most criticism stems from high expectations set by Wimpy's own rhetoric.

**Lessons from hard times:** Winpisinger, a high school dropout and auto mechanic from Cleveland with a football player's broad-shouldered physique, had been a rebellious character from an early age. Influenced by the experience of the Great Depression and the examples of John L. Lewis and Walter Reuther, Winpisinger developed a distinctively American style of pragmatic, seat-of-the-pants socialism as a young man. Watching mounds of potatoes being bulldozed into the ground because of low market prices while people were still going hungry, "I said, 'There's got to be a better way than that,'" Winpisinger says. "It was clear that unbridled greed gave us the Depression in the first place. That's why I'll always believe you've got to moderate market behavior, that there's a public interest that has to be injected."

Wimpy has a mechanic's non-ideological approach to politics. "My view of socialism is 'Goddamn it, there's an identifiable problem or need, and the resources of this country are great enough, we should be able to solve it on some rational, people-oriented value system,'" he says. "If you let greed solve it, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer."



Winpisinger says the "challenge of the future" is that union "power be used more judiciously and wisely than in the past."

His willingness to brusquely spout off his left-wing opinions, leavened with deadpan humor and frequently punctuated with the wave of a cigar, led some of his colleagues on the AFL-CIO executive council to treat him as a pariah. So, hoping to change the labor movement as much as to express his view, Winpisinger increasingly slipped into the shadows, dissenting selectively in public and trying to influence other labor leaders in private.

Out on the speaking stump he remained a hell-raiser, condemning corporate shenanigans and spineless politicians in blunt terms—referring to Reagan as "a lying horse's ass" and Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney as an "amiable dunce." He readily joined or helped start liberal coalitions on energy, taxes, inflation, nuclear arms, politics and consumer affairs.

**Retooling the Machinists:** Within the Machinists union itself, he tried to educate and mobilize both the members and staff. But he was greatly constrained by the traditional decentralization of power within the union, by radically declining resources as membership dropped and by the drag from an inherited bureaucracy. In the early '80s sharp drops in membership and money forced Winpisinger to lay off one-fifth of the union's staff. Abiding by the staff's contract meant Winpisinger lost most of the young,

**"The fact is we can't organize fast enough in the front door to replace what goes out the back door."**

energetic and bright new staffers he'd just hired. Yet at the same time, to get blue-collar exposure, the Machinists sponsored a con-

troversial, expensive racing car. The car now may be discontinued.

Winpisinger is particularly proud of the union's educational center he established at Placid Harbor, Md. Thousands of unionists and staff members have gone to the center to get a Wimpy-eye view of society or to study topics such as the impact of computerized technology. Out of one session came the Machinists' Technology Bill of Rights, a Scandinavian-model attempt to harness the benefits of technology for workers.

Winpisinger's other major educational innovation has had even wider impact. Inspired by Canadian unions, Winpisinger launched an ambitious "on-the-job canvass" by volunteers and unions stewards, who regularly talked with all rank-and-file members on union and political issues. That got the union more in touch with members and helped to "unionize the organized." Later the AFL-CIO picked up the idea, labeling it "one-on-one," for trial runs as a political education tool.

Winpisinger has never shied from taking his case to his members. Angered by the National Rifle Association's work for conservative candidates and issues, he organized NRA card-burning rallies at union lodge meetings. "If I don't think I could make the case [that the NRA is anti-union], I wouldn't do it," he says. "A lot of people said I couldn't make it fly in the IAM, but I never had anything more than arguments." Unlike most politicians, whom Wimpy thinks are paralyzed when polls show only minority support for a position, Winpisinger says, "I expect the first poll to be 25 percent in favor, and then you go out and build on it. You don't run the other goddamn way."

Winpisinger has broken ground in taking the union's case to the public as well. The Machinists monitored television to see how labor was portrayed—in the rare instances

it appeared. That sobering inquiry spurred development of the AFL-CIO's Labor Institute of Public Affairs and a multimillion dollar "Union, Yes" advertising campaign.

From early on, Winpisinger gave the word: form coalitions. Nobody took the advice more seriously than Wimpy himself. A backer of Citizen Action, a national coalition of statewide consumer groups, he helped to launch the Citizen Labor Energy Coalition and made a crusade of fighting natural gas deregulation. With the Communications Workers, his Machinists were the major force behind Jobs With Justice, the multi-union campaign in alliance with community groups to mobilize workers and others for active solidarity with other unions' causes. Winpisinger joined Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition (and, when Jackson asked, nominated him at the 1988 Democratic convention), and long served as co-chair of SANE (The Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy) and national vice chair of Democratic Socialists of America.

**Not working for peanuts:** Winpisinger often made his most newsworthy marks in politics. A vociferous critic of Carter as the "best Republican president since Herbert Hoover" and a supporter of Ted Kennedy in the 1980 Democratic primaries, Winpisinger walked out of the Democratic convention and announced support for Barry Commoner and the Citizens Party, although the IAM remained neutral. "Given the same set of circumstances," he now says, "tomorrow I'd do the same thing."

Winpisinger lauds AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland's efforts to unite labor behind a single candidate, and he wants the endorsement early, as with Walter Mondale in 1984. But New York Gov. Mario Cuomo is the only current potential unifier, Winpisinger says.

He seems deeply frustrated by the structure of American politics and collective bargaining and yearns for something closer to



the European social democratic model—more disciplined and unified parties and labor movements, more decisions on wages and benefits through centralized political means rather than decentralized bargaining.

"The labor movement by and large has been very undisciplined," he said. "There was never any nationally conceived coherent strategy. Every union was out there paddling its own canoe. If somebody made a breakthrough, then it was a matter of 'can you bat this?' because union leaders are politicians by law, and that means you've got to put on a good performance to get elected."

"We don't have the cohesiveness that characterizes the Western European social democracies, where they sit down, divide up the gross national product, say 'we're entitled to this much this year' and enact it into law, and you address inequities among industries, but the general wage increase is a product of the political apparatus."

Winpisinger's own social democratic program for the U.S. was spelled out in the 1983 document, *Let's Rebuild America*—a detailed call for investment and production planning, controls on corporations and comprehensive strengthening of labor rights and social security.

Yet despite Winpisinger's ambitions, anti-corporate politics and desire to resurrect a strong labor movement, he warns against unions abusing their power. "The advice I give to people in this union is that the challenge of the future will be, when labor is again vested with a certain degree of power, that the power be used more judiciously and wisely than in the past. Because the wanton use of that power in some respects got us into disrepute. It left us vulnerable to the charge that we put the country behind the eightball in the global economy, which is crap but nevertheless a popular perception. I say quietly use power and make sure you're using it to address a broad base and not just so-called selfish interest."

**Out of gear:** But the problem for the Machinists now is too little power. Once a million strong, as the sign on headquarters still proclaims, the active membership dipped to 528,000 in the early '80s and now stands at around 580,000. Despite Winpisinger's declarations that "organizing is priority No. 1," several knowledgeable observers think the Machinists have failed to mount a really serious, effective organizing effort. One former staffer calls organizing "the worst joke in the Machinists." Often organizers and their tactics are culturally out of touch with the new work force—"old white guys in recreation vehicles showing up to a plant with lots of immigrants, women, young people," says the staff critic.

Whatever the union's shortcomings in performance, Winpisinger personally remains open to any new organizing tactics. He strongly favors a proposal now heatedly debated within the AFL-CIO executive council to change labor law to give workers rights to form workplace councils. Some leaders fear such councils would compete with unions.

But Winpisinger himself seems stymied on what it will take to revive the labor movement. "I must confess that I don't know what could be done beyond where we are, short of an episode of violence or something like that," Winpisinger says. "I'm not even sure violence would. I'd advocate it if I thought it would improve [our situation]. The fact is we can't organize fast enough in the front door to replace what goes out the back door. We've gone through more than a decade of

*perestroika* without *glasnost*. We've been restructured without any consultation with those being restructured, all in the guise of the global economy. All the things I've tried, and I can't point to any dramatic successes in the IAM. If Eastern goes down the tubes, as appears likely, where do we get 8,000 members to replace them in a hurry?"

Winpisinger is caustically skeptical of employee ownership, profit- or gain-sharing plans, "team" proposals, management's plans to improve quality of work life and the Japanese management model as scams that exploit workers and serve managers.

A strong critic of management concession demands, Winpisinger sent out guidelines to Machinist locals on how to determine if em-

**"I don't think this society, even with Reagan, is dedicated to the credo that greed is the only principle by which we should run this country."**

ployers really need relief and, if granted, how to negotiate the concessions as investments that are paid back later. That strategy worked well for Republic Airline machinists, less so for Eastern employees.

**Wimpy and Lane:** Lane Kirkland is almost the antithesis in style of Winpisinger, but Winpisinger is generally respectful of Kirkland. "I was screaming for action," he says. "Whether he's been wholly successful or not, he was trying, and he gets the benefit of the doubt from me."

He and Kirkland differ strongly, however, on military and foreign policy. Winpisinger has been an active supporter of the liberal national labor committee on Central America, but in the big AFL-CIO convention fight in 1985 he let other critics clash with the Cold Warriors.

But three times Winpisinger traveled to the Soviet Union and met with union and political leaders, including Mikhail Gorbachov earlier this year, in violation of the AFL-CIO's longstanding taboos on contact with Communist unions. Every other group in society has exchanges, he says, so why not labor? "Being an ostrich is not a very attractive position," Winpisinger says, "because all the while your head's in the sand, your ass makes a very, very attractive target. I don't see and never have seen how ostracizing, villifying and discriminating against [Communist labor groups] creates anything useful." The Machinists' leader found on his last visit that the unions—which Gorbachov has instructed to start representing workers better—were keenly interested in learning from him how U.S. unions work. Winpisinger came away enormously impressed with Gorbachov's determination to change Soviet society.

**Mixed reviews:** The only openly socialist union president in the U.S. today, Winpisinger has friendly critics on the left, too—mainly over issues of internal union democracy and solidarity with union militants. "Winpisinger best expresses the two sides of the labor movement," says longtime Association for Union Democracy Executive Director Herman Benson. "He denounces capitalist society and makes great radical speeches, but inside his own union, people who come out and attack the leadership have to watch their step." And freelance organizer Ray Rogers—whose famous "corporate

campaign" against the virulently anti-union textile company J.P. Stevens was aided by Winpisinger's financial pressure against Manufacturers Hanover Bank—says of Winpisinger, "If I had one labor leader standing out and speaking to a crowd, it would be him, but in so many respects, he's been a total fraud."

Rogers criticized Winpisinger for not throwing the Machinists behind the eventually broken strike of TWA flight attendants. Others have faulted Winpisinger for not taking Machinists out in support of striking air controllers in 1980. In 1982 Winpisinger brought Rogers in belatedly to try to save an important, losing strike of skilled tool-makers at Brown & Sharpe. But even though Rogers was reviving the strike, Winpisinger abruptly pulled him out, to the dismay of local militants, and the strike collapsed.

"I don't know how you could make this union any more democratic than it is," Winpisinger maintains. He refrains from confronting the general issue of union democracy, corruption or mob influence. "I don't see any profit in throwing rocks at somebody else's house," he says. "Mine's made of glass, too. I just don't see any value of me criticizing the Teamsters or anybody else for things I perceive them to do that don't contribute to the overall progress of the labor movement."

But Winpisinger says the TWA flight attendants, whose new leaders had broken off merger talks with the IAM, "went on strike with the full expectation that we would win their strike for them." He says he quarreled with his members' deeply divided decision against supporting the strike but deferred to them. In the air traffic controllers' strike, Winpisinger tried to organize support, but the pilots balked. And the Machinists were not in a position to shut down all airports by themselves.

**"Liberalize the goddamn party":** In his frustration with the Democrats, Winpisinger has given "a lot of thought" to support for a third party, but it seemed at best

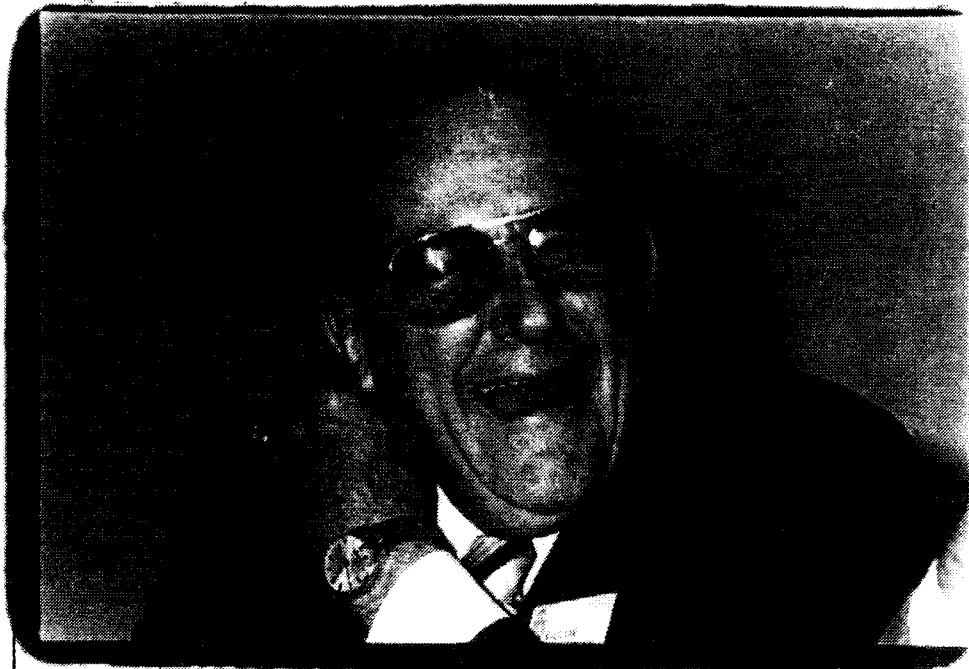
His advice to the Democrats is simple: "liberalize the goddamn party." He was able to convince many of his members building military equipment that arms spending should be cut and military production facilities converted to peaceful uses—and he thinks the Democrats can make that case to the public. What it takes is some conviction, coherent proposals and someone who can lead, he argues. He also wants a disciplined party where "the party's the dog, and the candidate's the tail."

"I don't think this society, even with Reagan and all his horseshit, is dedicated to the credo that greed is the only principle by which we should run the country," he says. "I think most Americans would respond to a campaign that runs in the same general road as Jesse Jackson's did. He was coherent in the largest sense, and articulated values very, very well, and attracted a lot of people."

Winpisinger's brash leftism gave breathing room to other, more cautious liberals within the ranks of labor leaders. Even some of the conservatives now take him a bit more seriously. "They can see I was right on some things," he says. "At least they listen now. They don't dismiss it as coming from a buffoon."

But others, including many rank and file within his own union, have been inspired by Wimpy's vision and tough-minded style. "He would go right into defense plants and argue for disarmament," recalls former staff member Marjorie Phyle. "They would cheer. Even if they didn't like what he said, they liked this guy who was so outspoken for workers." Winpisinger's successor, IAM Vice President George Kourpias, will have a different style but the same priorities. "This is not a union that's all of a sudden going to change because Winpisinger retired," Kourpias says.

In the immediate future, Winpisinger wants to putter in his wood and machine shops and "enjoy a few of the other human values I don't get to enjoy, and engage in a great experiment: see if you can life with



"At least they listen now," Winpisinger says of conservative labor leaders.

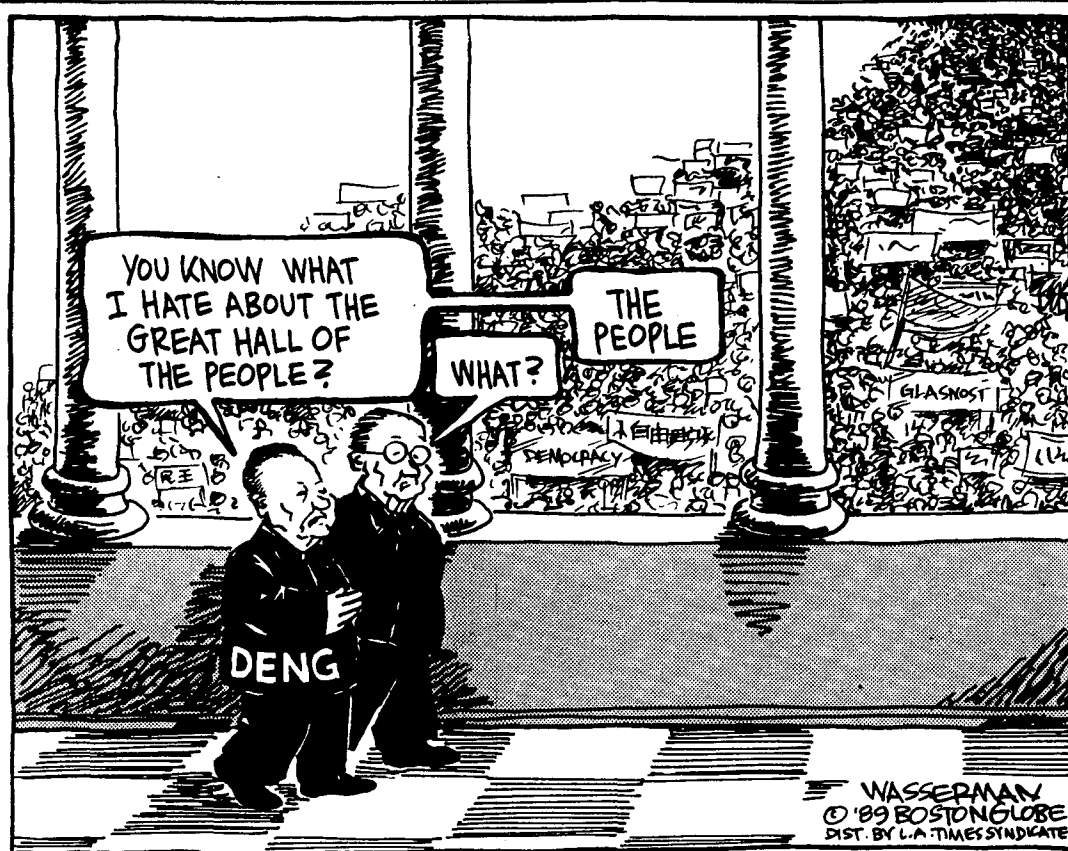
a very long-term prospect. "My theory is if you can't elect a sheriff, you can't elect a president," he says. And that means any third-party movement has to be at the grass roots first, and by the time you nurture that and it flourishes, a lot of years go by. While you're doing that you need some place to broker your interests in the national arena: the answer, Democrats. How are you going to influence the Democrats if you're out carving their heart out locally throughout the country? You could use a third party to blackmail them, but if I'm involved, I like a legitimate operation."

your wife." He remains hopeful for the labor movement because he has faith that people will increasingly become fed up with inadequate wages, job pressures, homelessness and other casualties of the "corporate state."

"It's not going to happen overnight," Winpisinger says, a touch of weariness in a voice that has angrily denounced the ills of capitalism for a dozen years. "But I think it's got to come or there will be social revolution in this country. There comes a time when people choke on this bullshit, and that choke point will come."



# EDITORIAL



## China rulers desperately cling to their power

The massacre of Chinese students by their own government—whose leader just a week earlier had participated in a televised meeting with a group of student leaders and had called them patriots—sent shockwaves throughout the world. It was the kind of brutality and contempt for human life that seemed to be a thing of the past, buried both by the reforms of recent years in Communist countries and by a revolution in communications that makes such actions almost impossible to obscure from public view. This was barbarity of a kind that even governments as corrupt and vicious as those of El Salvador and Guatemala have had to mask behind unofficial death squads. But the Chinese government, in disregard for world opinion and long-term domestic consequences, flagrantly murdered their own people in the most public of places and in the most official of ways.

Clearly, this was an act of desperation, executed by leaders woefully out of touch with their own subjects and unwilling to step aside peacefully. Weeks of massive student-led demonstrations left no doubt about popular distaste for the corruption and arrogance of China's rulers. The democracy movement—inspired in part by the example of the West and in part by events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—wanted only a government whose officials would be responsible to the people and accountable for their acts. To get this they demanded the political rights and civil liberties that give substance to the idea of democracy. Instead, an atavistic regime has given the Chinese people and the world a reminder of the dangers inherent in one-party rule.

**Opening ambits:** Public displays of popular disdain for Communist rule have been sweeping the East. In the Soviet Union, Poland and Hungary, as well as China, ordinary citizens have been finding ways to tell their rulers that a one-party state is incapable of meeting the needs of modern society and no longer tolerable. But in contrast to China's rulers, Soviet, Polish and Hungarian party leaders have understood that change is needed, and that at least partial accommodation to popular demands for democratization is the best hope of solving their domestic problems and maintaining their own power.

In each of these countries, in different ways, the political system is moving toward pluralism. In the Soviet Union there are two parties within the official party, and in recent elections the conservatives have suffered heavy defeats even where they were running unopposed. In Poland, in the first round of voting this month, Solidarity won majorities in almost all of the 160 races open to non-party candidates, while only five Communist-affiliated candidates received the 50 percent required for election to one of the 299 seats reserved for the Communist-led bloc. And in Hungary, Communist Party and opposition leaders are now negotiating the rules for a multiparty election that could lead to that nation's first coalition government in 40 years.

These developments, while only partial and still subject to arbi-

trary restrictions, are part of a worldwide groundswell for political democracy that is an inevitable result of the communications revolution. It is a revolt against parties that assumed the role played by the capitalist class in the West, only without the limitations on its power that were placed on Western capitalists as the result of 200 years of popular struggles for democratic rights.

In the United States, the Socialist movement before World War I was a vital part of the struggle for democracy, both political and economic. Ever since the development of Marxism-Leninism, however, socialism has been identified with Soviet Communism and has come to mean one-party rule, the absence of civil liberties and a command economy. American political ideologues in government and the media have happily promoted this view and worked hard to equate democracy with capitalism.

So it is no surprise that most American commentators see the popular uprisings in the Communist world as a choice of American-style capitalism over socialism. But there is no evidence that this is the case. In China, even as troops were firing on them in Tiananmen Square, the students marched out singing the "Internationale"—the socialist anthem. And in the Soviet Union most independent groups are not studying the United States, but Western examples of social democracy, especially Sweden.

The people of China, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe do want economic decentralization operating on market principles. They want an end to the stifling bureaucracy inevitably associated with a command economy. And they want the civil liberties and rights that can be guaranteed only by a pluralist political system. But they do not want to replace their government bureaucracy with a corporate one that is just as immune to popular control and just as prone to corruption and inequality. The uprisings in the East will not end in a triumph of corporate capitalism, but they will create the possibility of a truly democratic socialism. That is what the Chinese students wanted. They are defeated for now, but this is only one episode in an age-old struggle.

## Falwell from grace

You can now peel the "Moral Majority is Neither" bumper sticker off your car. The Moral Majority is no longer. While announcing last week that the group would be shutting down, Rev. Jerry Falwell claimed that "our mission is accomplished." Thankfully, Falwell was wrong. The bulk of the Moral Majority's mission—the inclusion of prayer in public schools as well as an end to legal abortion and First Amendment rights—has been largely unaccomplished. But the group, founded in 1979, did help get Ronald Reagan elected in 1980, while obliterating the left wing of Congress. And for that alone the deceased's stench will remain long after its carcass has rotted away.

In the end, it appears that the Moral Majority's reason to be was not divine revelation, as Falwell implied, but earthly revenue. The group's income had dropped markedly in recent years, and Falwell, who heads two multimillion-dollar ministries, seems to have decided that politics was simply eating up too big a slice of the piety.

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WATERS

GOUL



# LETTERS

## S&L bailout

IF PRESIDENT BUSH'S PROPOSED BAILOUT FOR the ailing savings and loan industry is passed we will truly have witnessed what columnist Neil Pierce referred to as "one of the great public policy heists of all time." While this proposal will cost taxpayers at least \$100 billion, it fails to address the causes of the crisis. More importantly, it provides no assurances that the industry will be able more effectively to help families buy homes—which is the reason the industry was created.

The bailout will be expensive. The Bush administration estimates the cost will be \$157 billion over the next 10 years, with taxpayers covering about two-thirds of that amount. The House Banking Committee staff places the cost at \$335 billion over the 30-year life of the bailout bonds, with \$183 billion coming from the public treasury. The cost for the average taxpayer will be at least \$1,000 over the next decade. The total package will cost more than 10 times the combined bailouts of Continental Bank in Chicago, Chrysler, New York City, Lockheed and Conrail.

Yet the bailout would still permit the kinds of speculative investments encouraged by deregulation in the '80s that brought the industry to the financial condition it is in today. And it would extend the industry's drift away from home mortgages.

Government-backed insurance for savings and loan deposits was provided in order to facilitate the borrowing of mortgage money to purchase homes. But the percentage of S&L investments in home loans declined from 65 percent in 1981 to 39 percent in 1987. During these same years production of homes for first-time buyers dropped by half, homeownership declined for the first time since the Depression and homelessness skyrocketed.

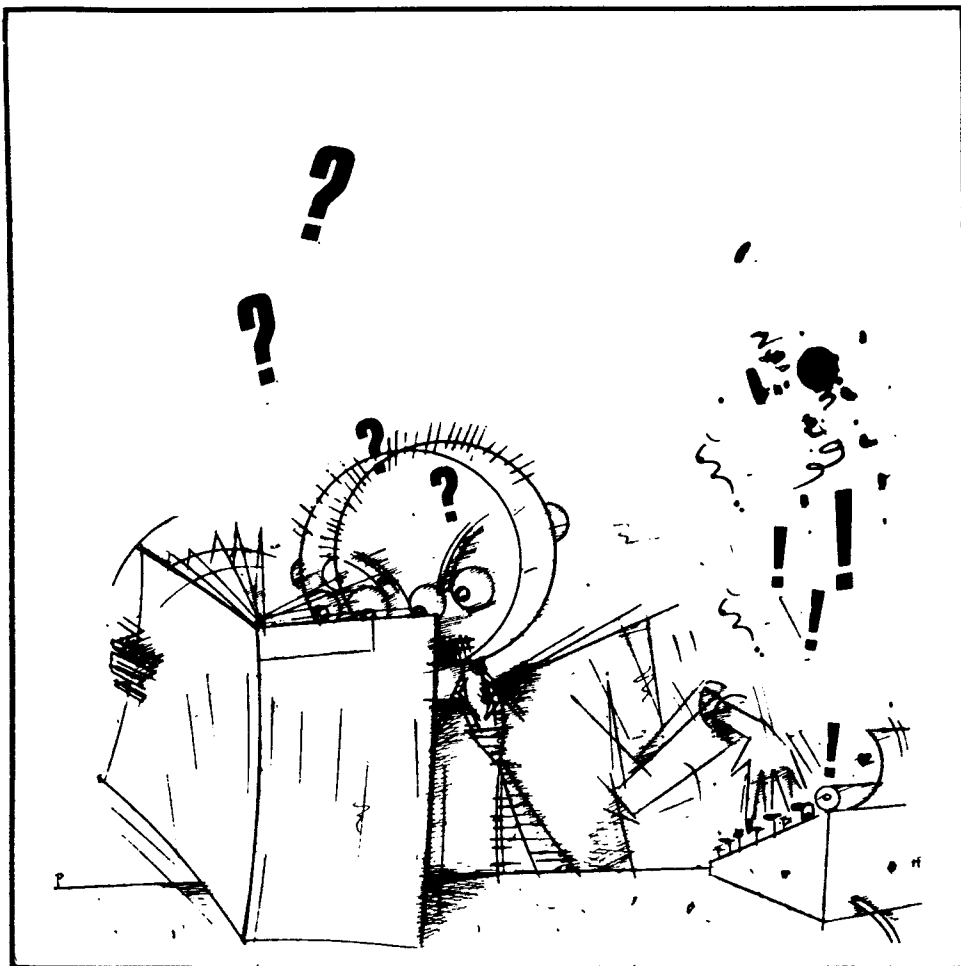
A loose-knit coalition of organizations including the National League of Cities, Consumer Federation of America and Center for Community Change and public officials Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) and Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D-TX) have offered alternatives. Their proposals would require those who created the crisis to pay a larger share of the costs and would more effectively tie the bailout to reinvestment initiatives to meet the nation's housing needs.

One proposal would create a Home Opportunities Fund, capitalized by members of the financial services industry, to provide low-cost financing for first-time homebuyers and finance low and moderate income housing. Another is for the Federal Home Loan Bank Board to require that 30 percent of the cash advance that the Bush proposal would extend to S&Ls be invested in community development and low and moderate income housing.

Part of the Bush plan calls for bankrupt thrifts to sell real estate holdings. Those properties could be made available at preferred rates to first-time homebuyers, public housing authorities or community organizations.

Anti-redlining laws could be strengthened by requiring mortgage lenders to report the number of applications they receive and reject by race, income and gender. Current disclosure laws require no such reporting.

Gregory A. Squires  
Chair, Department of Sociology  
University of Wisconsin—Madison



## Two sentences

YOUR LONG FOREIGN POLICY EDITORIAL (JFF, MAY 24) could have been contained in the last two sentences: "This nation was founded on opposition to foreign domination. It is time to start applying it to ourselves."

U.S. foreign policy actions have been inconsistent and in contradiction with our constitutional principles and ideals. Our foreign policy is based on imperial domination. We became involved in two world wars as part of contending imperial powers, without noticing that the imperial base is disintegrating.

Now that the Soviets have given up their policy of force and domination, we are left without an ideological enemy and exposed without a policy of our own.

The U.S. can no longer use force to dominate our Latin neighbors. Though Latin countries may lack democratic forms and experiences, they have found pride of national independence and are determined to work out their problems without the assistance of our Marines.

Nor can the U.S. remain in isolation. We need the friendship of other people for commercial and economic reasons. We face economic problems—far greater competition and better organized and technically advanced competitors. We need a foreign policy consistent with our ideals of fairness

and justice to serve as an active model in practice at home and in order to gain the trust and confidence of others.

We also need, and the world needs, an international instrument of government to adjust conflicts and differences that inevitably arise. We have belittled and denigrated the U.N. too much, too long. We had better begin rebuilding it.

Leon Blum  
Plantation, Fla.

## Amnesty and the death penalty

AS SALIM MUWAKKIL STATES (JFF, MAY 24), AMNESTY International (AI) opposes the death penalty as a violation of human rights. I share Muwakkil's view that the death penalty should be abolished. However, I am against AI's taking a stand on the issue (I am a member of AI).

AI has set itself the task of defending political oppositionists against their governments' persecuting them and violating their civil and human rights. Yet the situation of the criminal upon whom the death penalty has been imposed is fundamentally different from that of the persecuted political oppositionist who has committed no crime. The criminal facing the death penalty will have seen his case weighed by extensive judicial proceedings; the death penalty itself, if harsh, inhumane and irreversible, is

after all lawful. More important, the criminal—here the murderer or rapist—has deprived another human being of his her liberty, health or life. He does to his victim what governments whose actions AI protests do to their opponents. We cannot and must not place the criminal upon the level with the persecuted political; our attitude to the one is not fed by the same moral sources as our attitude to the other.

H. Brand  
Bethesda, Md.

## Consistency

A FEW COMMENTS ON ANDY FEENEY'S "ENVIRONMENTAL pro-choice" letter (May 24). The Catholic Church is not opposed to family planning. In fact, the church encourages married couples to plan their families responsibly. Confusion about the church's teaching on this subject arises because terms like "family planning," "birth control" and "contraception" are often used as if they mean the same thing.

The church does not teach that every sex act must end in procreation. Rather, it teaches that it is wrong to obstruct the natural processes of procreation at times when the woman is fertile. When couples restrict coitus to infertile days in a woman's cycle, they are making use of a facility that is provided by nature itself.

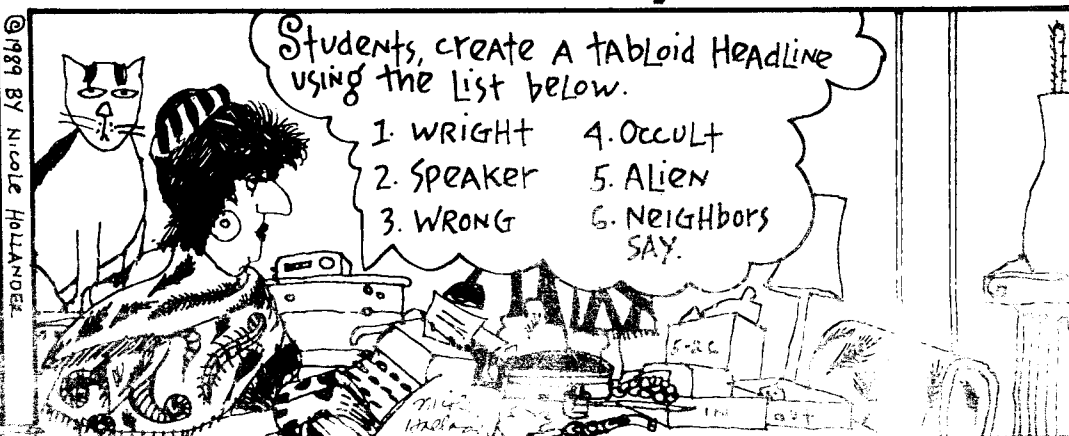
Some people are interested in natural family planning because of a realization that it is wise to live in accord with nature. Many people are appalled by the harm that has been done by humans when they applied their scientific knowledge without sufficient regard for the way it would upset the balance of nature. Others are just as concerned about the bodily pollution that is caused by contraceptive drugs and intrauterine devices. As a result, there is increased interest in doing things the natural way, whether that involves growing food, feeding or diapering a baby or family planning. It would be inconsistent for someone to be interested in hormone-free beef and then to take a powerful birth control drug provided by the medical-industrial complex.

It would be consistent for ecology-minded people to be interested in natural family planning, and it would be highly inconsistent for them to criticize it.

Mark V. Leners  
Nashville, Tenn.

**Editor's note:** Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

## SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander



# Remembering the ayatollah and Iran's way of death

By Cynthia Brown Dwyer

**M**Y HUSBAND WOKE ME AT 1:00 A.M. JUNE 4 to tell me that the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had died. Iranians all over this country were probably waking each other that night with the same news—news that I'm certain was widely received among American Iranians and throughout parts of Fars, Mazandaran, Baluchistan, Kurdistan, Azerbaijan and other regions with great relief and no little jubilation.

For now, surely, the great hater of the Great Satan—and much else—will face his maker, Allah, Owner of the Day of Judgment, as Moslems say many times a day in prayer. Ironically, those whose faith was sorely tested because of Khomeini's cruelty will claim that God will deal harshly with this man who perverted many aspects of the Islamic faith.

It did not take long after I arrived in Tehran in April 1980 to sense that Khomeini—portrayed on omnipresent, gigantic posters, the trappings of a decidedly un-Islamic personality cult—was an old man who hated. I went to Tehran to write a book about the effects of the Islamic Revolution on the lives of ordinary Iranians. I had begun doing interviews when, on April 24, the U.S. launched a failed helicopter raid to rescue the 53 American hostages. I was arrested on May 5 and, being a freelancer, had no media organization to get me out.

During my subsequent nine-month imprisonment, I learned vividly about what Khomeini hated: music, dancing, poetry, political discussion, any interpretation of worship that ran counter to his own, an independent place in the modern world for women and the joyous celebration of births and weddings in time-honored Iranian tradition. His regime changed the cities and 20,000 villages of Iran, making life for 51 million Iranians more drab and as frightening as it had been under the Shah.

I was quite frightened myself on many harrowing occasions. Yet I was never harmed. I was held in Evin Prison until Feb. 11, 1981, three weeks after the hostages were released. I was never part of the hostage group, and though I was convicted in a religious court without a lawyer of "spying for the CIA," I did no such thing. The whole charge was funny and ironic, because the Iranians could not have found someone more opposed than I to the CIA's vicious meddling in foreign countries.

**The sound of firing squads:** Khomeini's spite was translated into murderous impulses. Any threat to his supreme power or to his concept of the Islamic republic meant a quick trial and *tir baran*—death by firing squad. Death by stoning was even encouraged in the countryside. During my time without charges at Evin, I heard nightly executions of officers accused of a June 1980 coup attempt; I counted to about 200. I prayed harder than at any time in my life for the safety of three women sleeping—and weeping—on my mattress, women who had been tried for treason with the last of these men. They lived, but many women and girls were shot in prison after I left, in subsequent government rampages against perceived enemies. Anything could be



Jonathon Rosen, United Features Syndicate

called "warring against God," punishable by death, although the Koran has strict limits on who can be put to death. Evin's adjoining courts were filled with turbaned judges who greatly exceeded these limits.

I was in Evin the night Iraq invaded Iran in September 1980, and I shared my fellow inmates' terror when we heard bombing and artillery fire. Instinctively I sided with the Iranian people against an aggressor, for if Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had been able to take the oil fields of Khuzistan, it would have cut the very heart out of the Iranian economy. And yet Khomeini's council of state used that oil wealth and the blood of an entire generation—young men deluded into seeking martyrdom on the battlefield—to wage war far past the time peace could have been negotiated. The only winners were the world's arms dealers.

**Looking back:** For nine years I have tried to imagine what has happened to the hundreds of Iranians I met. I know the fortunes of only a handful. One interrogator has advanced to a position in the foreign ministry, and I see him as a spokesman on television; several friends and fellow prisoners escaped to England or America; the prison doctor, who refused to draw my proffered blood for front-line wounded (I had lost too much weight), was released; the warden of Evin—whom I liked because he kept us in good food, warm blankets, hot water and fumigated premises—was assassinated, as were two members of a torture-investigation team that toured the prison. By the time they arrived, I was functioning like an Iranian woman, wrapped in a veil, teapot in my hand to serve their group sitting cross-legged on the floor.

Sometimes it seemed as though the common denominator in Iranian life was the tea

service. Tea and cookies appeared at the foreign ministry desk, where I went before arrest to collect my freelance journalist's card. Tea was offered by the man who turned me in to Iranian authorities before my arrest to collect my freelance journalist's card. Tea was offered by the man who turned me in to Iranian authorities. I drank tea with convicted prostitutes, recovering drug addicts, a host of interrogators, Revolutionary Guards, wives of fanatical assassins, young Mujahed students, Bahais and Zoroastrians and, from red plastic glasses, with the beautiful, strong Kurdish women. Tea got me through minor surgery and a long, dry-mouthed wait to be tried and sentenced to time served.

One thing became clear: the revolution began as a widely supported rebellion against a Western-sponsored monarchy, with a dreadful secret service (SAVAK) to quell dissent. But, as a bookstore clerk said, the Shah was replaced by the "kingdom of the mullahs."

And yet Khomeini may have strengthened Iran in one way: he held both East and West at bay, freeing Iran—except for its dependence on arms—of powerful outside political forces that have tried to control its economic life for centuries and have sought to influence its cultural life, especially in the materialistic 20th century. Khomeini despised the West; the West, which had always denigrated and misrepresented Islam, despised him back and seized the opportunity his powerful hatred and opportunism offered to slander all Moslems even more grotesquely than usual.

**After Khomeini:** I wonder how many people will venture predictions of what will happen next in Iran. Knowing Iranians, I am sure each will have a strongly held opinion. Of the following I feel certain: as nice as it

might be for a Western mind to imagine, the National Front moderates and Abolhasan Bani-Sadr in Paris will not make a comeback any time soon. The Mujahedin-y-Kalq, who foolishly threw in their lot with Iraq, cannot regain respect inside Iran. The secular left leadership has been decimated. And unless a very sizable anti-clerical group in the military has survived the purges and remains inside Iran, the young Shah will not be enthroned. I doubt if a Khomeini dynasty, like the two Pahlavi shahs, will be established with Ahmed taking his father's place. Khomeini tried to discredit the Ayatollah Hussein Ali Montazeri, who may have some followers and negotiating strength left, although he is under virtual house arrest for his unexpected and courageous letters of severe criticism of Khomeini.

I would place bets on Hojatolislam Hashemi Rafsanjani, who has held more power longer than anyone now living in Iran. He has powerful friends in the military, the Revolutionary Guard, the Bazaar and the theological circles that have produced Iranian politicians for a decade. He is said to control the intelligence apparatus, and he is wily and pragmatic, a survivor. The quick appointment of President Ali Khamenei to succeed Khomeini does not mean he will have Khomeini's powers, for his religious rank is much lower.

**The big bad wolf:** In Iran the children play hide-and-seek as ours do, chanting: "Tiptoe away, because go where you may, the wolf is hiding on the way," and counting in plaintive little voices, "Yek, do, se, chahar, panj" as they run to hide. The night before I was moved to the Evin Prison from a secret interrogation house, I stood on the balcony outside my locked bedroom and watched a tiny boy hiding in the moonlit bushes in the fragrant Persian garden below. That image sustained me until I got home to Buffalo, N.Y., and I praise Allah that the war ended before he was old enough to be a soldier. I pray also that his father, an army or intelligence officer, who was my special—and very kind and merry—guard, has survived the carnage at the front and in Tehran as well.

Almost everyone in Iran became afraid of or intimidated by the big bad wolf. The huge mourning crowds at Khomeini's funeral are typical of hysterical religious events in Shia Iran, but the wailing and flagellation do not necessarily connote love for the old man. Maybe tonight someone in the beautiful city of Isfahan, the ancient city of Yazd, near the desert town of Tabas where eight Americans died on a foolish mission, or in the holy city of Meshad, is singing, "The big bad wolf is dead!"—or the Farsi equivalent.

Cyrus' Persia will endure. The columns of Persepolis survived Alexander the Great, and they have outlasted the most violent phase of Islamic Iran. The evil eye, scourge of the Persians, may be somewhat bleary this morning.

Cynthia Brown Dwyer is a freelance writer, author of "Women Imprisoned in the Kingdom of the Mullahs," in the anthology *Women and Revolution in Iran* (Westview Press) and a volume of poetry, *In a Persian Garden and Other Places*. She is working on a novel about her experiences, *In Trouble's Bosom*.



## Doing It with Mirrors: Different President, Same Hype

People who think that the Reagan presidency was largely sustained by hype should take note of what's happening with George Bush. Look at the press or the evening news-casts through half-closed eyes and you would imagine that this is a president bursting with bold initiatives. Let's look at a few of them.

**Out-Gorbying Gorby:** The president's trip to Europe and speech to the NATO powers was hailed as a brilliant coup, snatching the diplomatic initiative from the PR maestros in the Kremlin.

No one likes to see the home team lose, and it's the same with the White House press corps. Bush would have to have fallen flat on his face in mid-speech to have got bad reviews. There's a familiar dynamic here.

**Stage one:** press says president is beleaguered, floundering, sinking rapidly in public esteem, with "air of almost palpable despondency among his closest aides."

**Stage two:** press says president is about to make "major speech" in attempt to regain initiative, even though his closest aides concede position is desperate.

**Stage three:** press reports White House battles over content of major speech, now described as only thing that will save president from immediate impeachment for incompetence and worse; quotes from congressional leadership amplify sense of gloom and panic.

**Stage four:** president makes speech which to eye of neutral observer seems rife with blunder, fuff and lie, but network commentators hail it swiftly as "brilliant comeback," deemed likely to "confound his critics"; congressional leaders are exultant at president's strong showing.

**Stage five:** next day's headlines cite "overwhelmingly favorable response," quoting mostly the president's closest supporters; president himself makes triumphant appearance at annual convention of VFW; receives prolonged and stormy ovation.

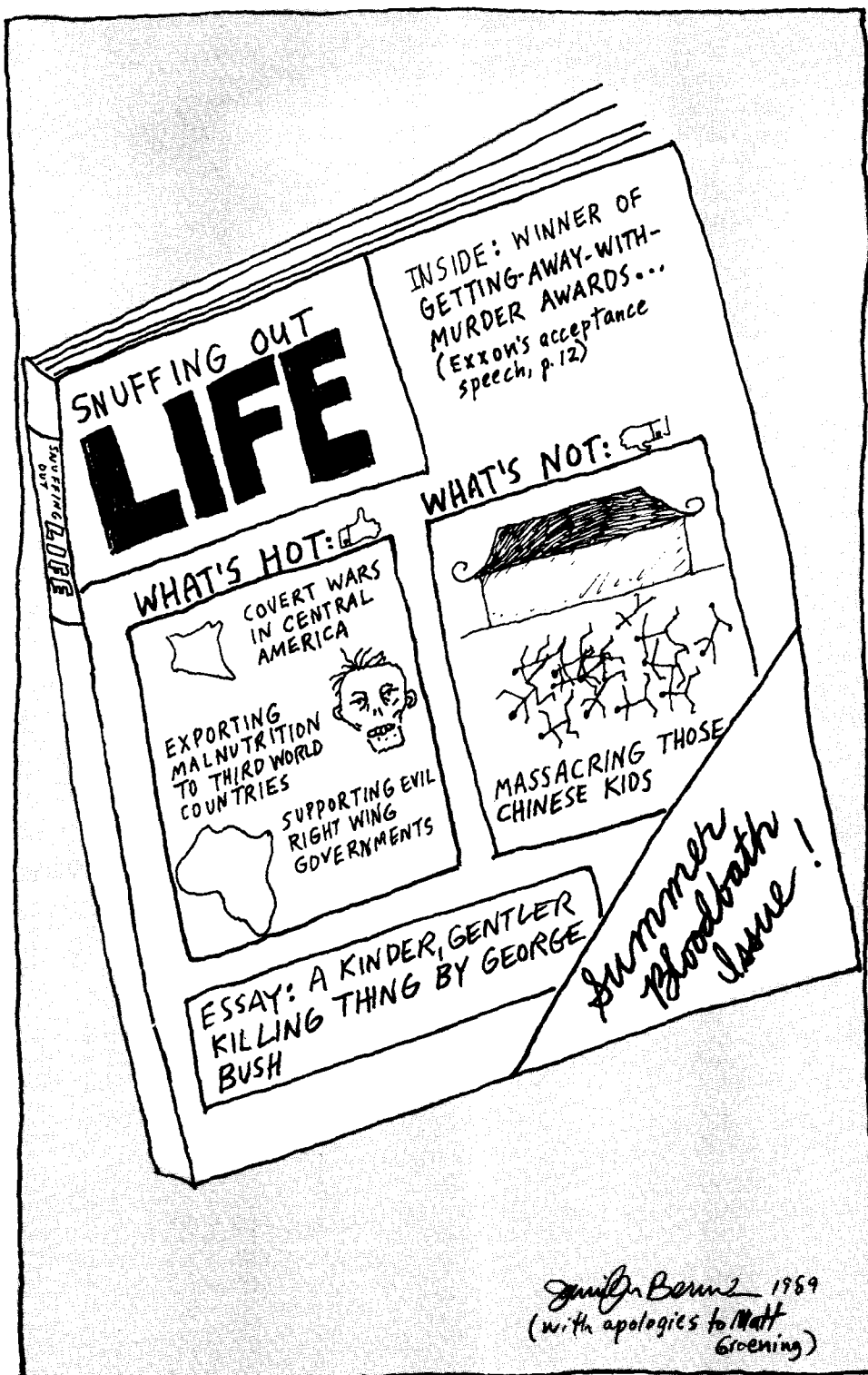
This ritual occurs on a fairly regular basis. You may recall Reagan's comeback speech during the Iran-contra scandal, in which he mired himself in one frightful lie after another, and in an address so steeped in mendacity that even his natural hair came to resemble a wig. But Bob Dole said he'd "hit it out of the park," and no one quoted on TV or in the next day's papers seemed inclined to disagree.

What actually happened in Europe? Bush gave a speech that placed the onus for the bulk of future force reductions on the Soviet Union. Read subsequent newspaper reports with fully opened eyes and you found administration officials noting that "the Western proposals for cutting conventional arms would require NATO to make only modest cuts in its overall force levels.... The Soviet bloc would be required to undertake the brunt of the weapons cuts.... Cuts in weapons could be carefully distributed among NATO members so that the oldest weapons in the Western alliance were singled out as prime candidates for destruction" (Michael Gordon, reporting in the *New York Times* for June 2).

Other reports, such as Melissa Healy's in the *Los Angeles Times* the same day, stressed the modernization angle: "Two Pentagon officials emphasized that Bush's offer, far from dismantling the U.S. military presence in Western Europe, would leave a

## ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn



highly effective U.S. force...." After the first flush of applause for the president's bold suggestion that the talks be resolved within a year, White House spokesmen began to emphasize that this was a "hope" rather

his claims to 'new thinking' on nuclear weapons."

The Bush game plan is clear enough. The administration will try to trump Gorbachov's willingness to cut back Soviet

### Bush's media "triumph" in Europe was a replay of a familiar script in which mediocrity emerges victoriously over the usual incompetence.

than a guarantee.

Then, on June 8, Bush, swollen with the success of the NATO outing, allowed his PR people to leak "radical new offers" that he was about to make regarding long-range nuclear missiles when talks with the Soviets begin on June 19. Once again, reading the reports with fully opened eyes, one could espy that the real meat in this proposal is a call on the Soviet Union to eliminate all 308 of its biggest missiles, rather than half, as they have already agreed. Reporting in the *Los Angeles Times* for June 9, Robert Toth wrote that "those [in the Bush administration] offering bold departures" say "that if Gorbachov balks, he will undercut

forces by raising the ante higher and higher, insisting that Soviet "imbalance" in conventional forces be adjusted before strategic arms treaties be signed, then raising the

old scare of the Reagan years that the Soviet land-based ICBMs pose a particularly grave threat because of their greater accuracy, etc., etc. The calculation is evidently that at some point Gorbachov will be forced to dig in his heels, at which point White House and press corps will bellow that the Soviet bear is up to his old tricks, cannot be trusted, and that we must keep our powder dry, at a continuing cost of \$300 billion a year. Meanwhile, old weapons will be thrown out, and when the present peace threat is past, the Pentagon can rush forward shouting that the wily Gorbachov has caused "almost catastrophic compromising" of U.S. national security and that a huge corrective leap in U.S. defense spending is required.

Meanwhile, of course, the situation in Europe is truly changing. But that's another story, and one to which the U.S. ruling elites have as yet no answer.

Now for another supposed initiative.

**The Brady bailout:** Near the start of the Bush era, the papers were full of something referred to vaguely as Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady's "new plan" for Third World debt relief. Reporters noted that "as yet details were still cloudy," but that somehow soon everything was going to be all right.

What's actually happened in the Bush era is that almost all Latin American economies are in a state of total collapse. If China and Iran and congressional scandals had not been holding the headlines, then presumably the American public would be alerted to the fact that for Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and smaller Latin economies, apocalypse is now. They are falling through the floor. Argentina is seeing hyperinflation, and Brazil is on the edge of it. The Mexican economy is in ruins.

This is not something that suddenly swerved into view, to the amazement of all. For years sensible economists have been pointing out that unless there is debt relief, then many Third World economies will entirely collapse. Now they have collapsed.

What has been the response of the Bush administration? The Brady plan basically tells a collapsing Latin American economy that if, in the midst of its terminal agonies, it sells off its basic assets and surrenders its internal markets absolutely to U.S. penetration, then some temporary "relief" might be proffered. No "recovery" is being offered here, but merely the terms of final surrender.

It's one thing to send in tanks and mow down students and workers. The headlines reflect the crime. But what U.S. bankers and the International Monetary Fund, supported by the Bush administration and by almost the entire U.S. press corps, have been doing is just as homicidal, in fact far more so. It just requires a little more work—not much—to send out reporters to collect the data on infant mortality, attenuated lives, the fairly rapid consequences of malnutrition and overall economic degradation. ■

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## On Bended Knee: The Press and the Reagan Presidency

By Mark Hertsgaard  
Farrar Straus Giroux, 408 pp., \$22.50

By Susan J. Douglas

IT WASN'T ON THE BESTSELLER LIST. IT has received condescending reviews in the dominant press. And although it is never attacked by name, Mark Hertsgaard's *On Bended Knee* has been dismissed as both wrong and irrelevant. Hertsgaard argues that the Reagan administration's methods of managing the media permanently changed White House-press relations, producing a more pliant, passive press corps and a presidency dependent upon packaging and PR techniques.

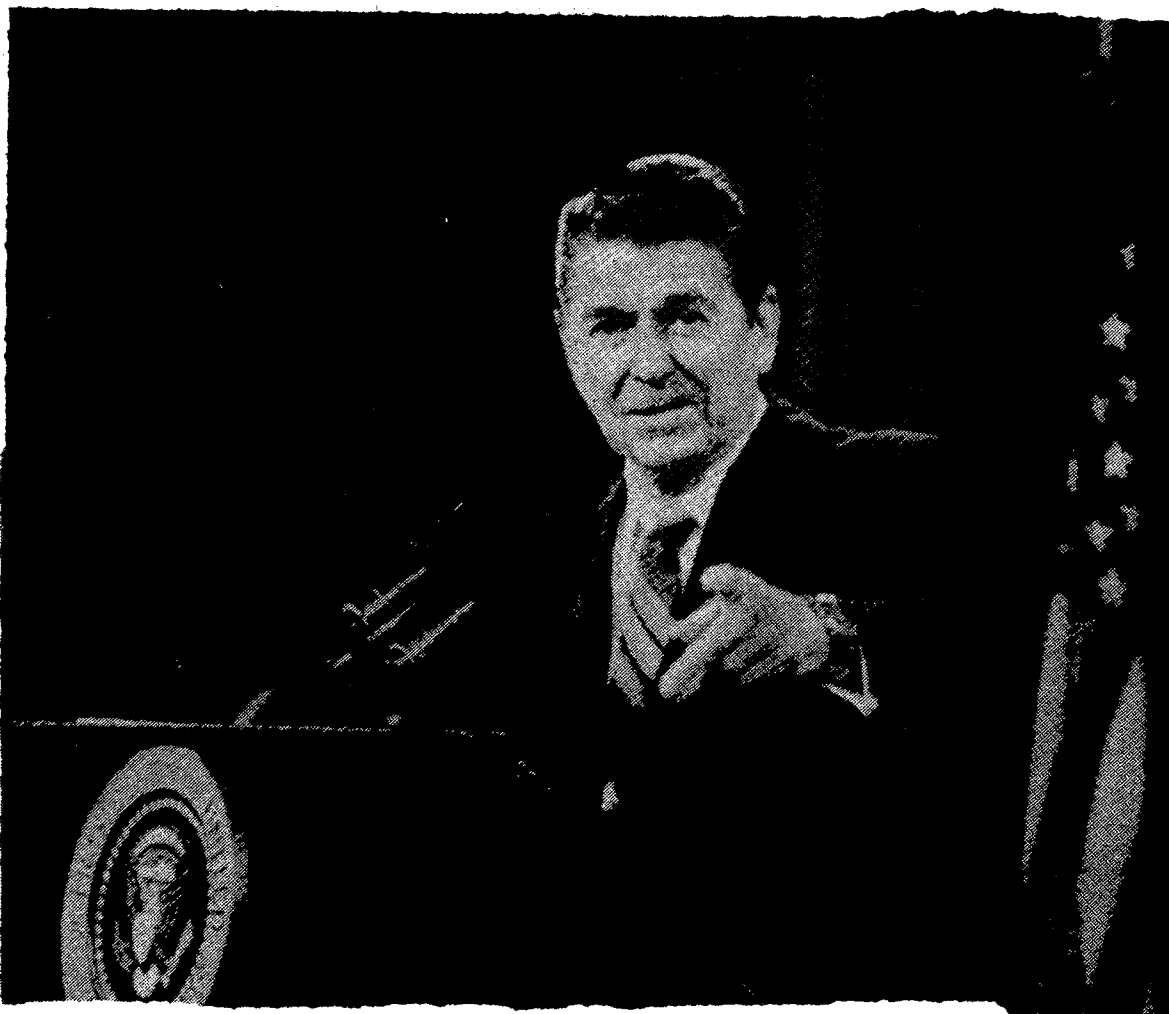
Nonsense, assert publications such as the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and *U.S. News and World Report*. All this spring the media have been running major stories about how George Bush has completely undone much of the Reagan revolution by disdaining image-making, refusing to devise a media strategy and being totally open with the press.

**Bush spinoff:** Articles repeatedly celebrate his new "accessibility," and what's come to be called Bush's "neighborliness." Headlines such as "No Made-for-TV Presidency," "The Not-Playing-for-Prime-Time Presidency" and "Without Packaging, President Bush is no Ronald Reagan" introduce stories that assert George Bush "sees no need to dominate the news or play to the press."

According to *U.S. News*, Bush is "doing great without a media strategy"; the *Wall Street Journal* proclaims Michael Deaver's presidential packaging techniques have been "tossed out the window" and are "passé." In all of these stories, George Bush comes across as the Mr. Rogers of politics.

Now, call me cynical, but this media-Bush lovefest makes me just a tad suspicious. Am I really supposed to believe that because Bush doesn't govern by sound bites that no news management is going on? I mean, do Marlin Fitzwater and John Sununu strike you as aw-shucks, let's-just-see-what-happens kinda guys? Does all this accessibility and openness mean PR techniques have been foresworn?

The media's insistence that presidential packaging is a thing of the past, an aberration particular to the Reagan years with no relevance to the Bush administration confirms my belief that *On Bended Knee* hit quite a few nerves. In fact, Hertsgaard's book about the incestuous relations between the media and the presidency is "must reading" for anyone interested in the role of the media in U.S. politics and culture. While his focus is on the particularities of presidential packaging during the Reagan years, Hertsgaard also provides a broader critique of how



## Bend, but don't break the story: scribes prone to please prez

the Washington press corps has been coopted by access to money and power and cowed by news organizations unwilling to question authority.

The question guiding Hertsgaard's analysis is: how and why did a president with Reagan's obvious intellectual weaknesses and a right-wing political agenda elude critical press coverage? To answer this, he conducted 175 interviews with former White House officials and with reporters, editors and managers of the print and electronic press. His passionate and often discouraging book interweaves a host of telling (and sometimes outrageous) anecdotes within a broader structural discussion of how and why the news media under Reaganism served, more than ever, as an uncritical and often sycophantic government mouthpiece.

**Power of positive PR:** Hertsgaard demonstrates how public relations techniques were central to the Reagan administration, a notion distilled in a quote from Leslie Janka, a deputy White House press secretary who resigned after the Grenada invasion. "The whole thing was PR. This was a PR outfit that became president and took over the country. And to the degree then to which the Constitution forced them to do things like make a budget, run a foreign policy and all that, they sort of did. But their first, last and overarching activity was public relations."

Hertsgaard begins with brief biographies of Reagan's crack PR team: Michael Deaver, David Gergen, Richard Darman and James Baker. Gergen and Larry Speakes had both worked in the Nixon White House and learned firsthand the dangers of a hostile relationship with the press. Michael Deaver's background was in public relations.

And James Baker, understanding the need to link legislative strategy with media strategy, was, according to Gergen, "the maestro ... who brought it all together." The "gang of four" agreed on a simple but ironclad approach to the media: control the flow of information, limit reporters' access to the president, repeat the same message many times and speak in one voice.

Gergen also grasped the importance of coopting the press: providing reporters with pleasant surroundings, office equipment, good food and plenty of press releases and visual images to make their job easier. As one reporter noted during the 1983 Western economic summit meeting, "Jesus Christ, how can I write a nasty story? Every time I need something, somebody is there to provide it for me. I got two phones right in front of me, food over there; it's really hard to write a nasty story."

**Doing some lines:** In addition to cultivating chummy relations with reporters, Gergen and company also understood that it was important to stay on the offensive

and flood the press with information on stories the White House wanted emphasized.

### JOURNALISM

This led to daily breakfast meetings in which Baker, Gergen, Deaver and others on the communications team devised their "line of the day." All events, images and press releases were to reinforce the line of the day. When a particular line was decided upon, White House officials transmitted it via computer to other senior administration officials, and then down the hierarchical lines of the federal bureaucracy. Reporters were given the line of the day at a 9:15 a.m. briefing and, according to Larry Speakes, "their first question was always, 'Can we get pictures? Can we get pictures?'"

**The objective bias:** Hertsgaard also examines how the corporate structure of news organizations and the insistence on "objectivity" actually bias the national news toward a cautious, non-questioning stance that consistently favors governing elites and encourages news management. Media critics such as Herbert Gans and Todd Gitlin have made these points effectively before, but what's new about Hertsgaard is how he illustrates this analysis with specifics from the Reagan administration.

We learn which network executives played tennis with top White House officials, and hear from jour-

nalists themselves how the rewards and pressures in their news organizations promoted self-censorship of "tough" stories on Reagan. And we see how the allegiance to objectivity ensured that the press had to print or announce—without question—Reagan policies and statements and then get "the other side" from some other government insider.

By reviewing the coverage of a range of events in detail, from the elections in El Salvador to the invasion of Grenada and the Iran-contra affair, Hertsgaard shows how the doctrine of objectivity is, actually, deeply ideological and served the Reagan agenda. Characterizing Reagan's policies as "dominated by a bundle of ideas that almost without exception were contradicted by objective facts, common sense, or both," Hertsgaard notes, "the American news media remained remarkably blasé in the face of the seemingly endless stream of irrational or otherwise baseless claims flowing from Washington."

So how did Reagan get away with this? For one thing, reporters were charmed by Reagan. Unlike Carter, who was aloof and humorless, or Nixon, who was openly hostile to the press, Reagan was extremely affable. Maynard Parker, editor of *Newsweek*, acknowledged, "I would agree that Reagan has gotten the breaks in terms of press coverage for the reason that most reporters covering him genuinely like the man and find it difficult to be as tough as they might."

Hertsgaard also blames the Democrats, who failed to articulate criticisms of Reaganism the press would be obliged to print. But it is the media's "accommodating passivity" that Hertsgaard documents and hammers away at repeatedly.

The media's lack of backbone in the face of the Reagan administration is best exemplified in a clash over the imposition of "the Deaver rule." In the spring of 1982 Deaver demanded that White House reporters stop asking Reagan questions during Oval Office photo opportunity sessions with foreign leaders.

When journalists balked, Deaver said that if reporters did not stop asking questions, they would not be allowed in the Oval Office at all. Network correspondents countered that if they didn't go in, neither would their cameras—which meant the White House might be cut off from TV exposure. The standoff lasted two days, after which NBC broke ranks and acceded to Deaver's terms. The other networks felt they had to follow suit. Although reporters eventually did begin asking questions in these sessions again, the networks learned that when push came to shove, the White House would win. And Reagan's PR team learned, in turn, to use such sessions to show-



case Reagan's infamous "quips." **Sea change in style:** It is true that Bush has departed somewhat from the Reagan routine. He gives frequent, impromptu press conferences, is not seen only getting on or off a helicopter and is constitutionally incapable of delivering a quip. But before we buy what the dominant press is now selling us about the huge sea change in presidential news management, let's review the striking similarities in approach between Bush and his predecessor.

First, Bush's team learned from Reagan that a key to good media coverage is that the president be liked by the press. Since Bush has,

according to *U.S. News*, "impressed many with his openness and down-to-earth amiability," his strategy of accessibility is working so far. Like Reagan, Bush inundates the press with information, and while it might not take the form of a "line of the day," it nevertheless shows an administration on the offensive with the media.

Most importantly, the Bush team has raised cooptation to an art form. Not only does he chat up reporters every chance he gets, he also invites them over to the White House for dinner, barbecues or informal tête-à-têtes. On such occasions he often asks reporters for their reactions to his latest thinking

about various issues. So Bush seeks to cultivate a sense of being a privileged insider among reporters. How can you write a nasty story about someone you just played horseshoes and ate weenies with, or about someone who just asked for your advice on world affairs?

As the fatuous coverage of Bush's recent trip to Europe demonstrates, you can't. According to Leslie Gelb of the *New York Times*, the Bush team "sensed disaster on the eve of his trip to Europe." So White House officials contacted reporters to express Bush's concern about how he might handle East-West relations. He was tired of Gorbachov's repeated PR successes

and was considering whether he should abandon the old containment mentality.

We don't know what reporters said during these intimate little phone calls. What we do know is that Bush proposed bringing a few troops home from Europe and was transformed overnight into a "conquering hero, a world statesman." As Gelb notes, "what got across in the news was the impression that the president had finally kicked aside his overly cautious handlers and taken charge." Nah, couldn't be any news management or PR techniques here.

Bush is being sold as a departure from Reagan and, in terms of per-

sonal style, he is different. But let's not forget that the substance of his message is the same. Just like his predecessor, "Gentle George" insists that corporations are the best custodians of the environment, that women's bodies belong not to them but to the state, that if we ignore the deficit (remember that?) it will just go away. To suggest that there's no media strategy because Bush is accessible, chummy and avuncular is like saying that the Bartles and Jaymes ads aren't really advertising because we get to sit on the porch steps with two lovable old coots. ■

Susan J. Douglas writes regularly for *In These Times*.

# The fancy footwork of fitting women into the shoe industry

**Men, Women, and Work: Class, Gender, and Protest in the New England Shoe Industry, 1780-1910**

By Mary H. Blewett  
University of Illinois Press  
444 pp., \$29.95

By Dana Frank

IF THERE'S ONE THING THE "NEW" labor history has seemingly mastered, it's the industrial revolution. The story of the shoe industry (on which some of the best work has been written) captured it all: as capitalists centralized ownership and production in increasingly mechanized factories, our heroes, the noble, manly artisans, called upon a republican "equal rights" tradition to contest the demise of their traditional way of life. Protest failed to halt the capitalists' unhappy triumph, and by the 1880s the proud artisan had been transformed into the dependent worker.

Mary Blewett's new book, *Men, Women, and Work*, cracks this now-classic story wide open. Her study of the complexities of gender and the 19th-century New England shoe industry shows that the industrial revolution was more complex than we've thought. And if we don't even understand the industrial revolution, then the whole field of labor history is suddenly up for grabs.

Before this book, we knew almost nothing about women and the artisanal craft system. We knew a lot about the Lowell textile mill girls, but their tale remained in a separate box, apart from the "main" story of debased artisans duking it out with the new bosses.

The tremendous originality of Blewett's book, though, is that it doesn't just "add" women to the 19th-century tale. Yes, she does a great job of capturing women's fate in the shoe industry. But she also shows that the core story of the industrial revolution is an inextricably intertwined one of both women and men. It is a gendered story.

For Blewett, gender is embedded in the social relations of production, part and parcel of the development of the New England economy. Here's another deceptively challenging agenda to this book: of late, the hottest controversy within women's and labor history is raging over Joan Scott's new theories of gender and history. Blewett, though she does not do so consciously (the book went to press too early), is one of the first to counter with concrete analysis Scott's theory that a gendered analysis of working-class history should concentrate on questions of "discourse."

**No simple comradeship:** Blewett begins by arguing that the original transition from craft to factory

## LABOR

was of a piece with the introduction of a sexual division of labor into the shoe industry. At the very moment shoe bosses broke down the process of shoemaking into discrete tasks, they dispatched the work of stitching the shoes' uppers to rural New England women. Male artisans now worked under a boss—but in a collective setting with other men. Female shoebinders, by contrast, labored all alone in their isolated kitchens, subjected to the worst abuses of the piece-rate system.

## The industrial revolution is a gendered story.

The industrialization of shoes marched on, the scale of production burgeoned and employers increasingly hired women not just in their homes as outworkers, but, by the 1850s, as "lady stitchers" in the factories themselves. A seemingly innocuous historical argument, but, as Blewett makes clear, this transition meant that, for women, the explosion of the factory system meant not a degradation but an improvement

of their working lives. The exact opposite, in other words, of our traditional wisdom on the effect of the industrial revolution on "the workers." Another basic tenet of labor history demolished.

The implications of Blewett's analysis of the nature of 19th-century workers' protests are equally enormous. As she shows, women joined in wave after wave of shoeworkers' protests against their employers. It was not, however, all happy comradeship between union brothers and sisters. Male unionists consistently ignored the shoe women's presence in their factories, relegated them, ideologically and strategically, to the position of loyal wives (ignoring the women's own waged labors) or, when it came time to negotiate with the bosses, sold their union sisters down the river. Ultimately, Blewett argues, the male activists' failure to come to terms with women's concerns weakened their ability to fight the employers as a class.

**Gender solidarity?** Women workers, Blewett underscores, were not some monolithic "undifferentiated mass." Married women, in fact, put their menfolks' demands first. Single women, by contrast—including those who themselves supported families—thought women workers should get a full living wage.

Blewett implicitly favors a "gender solidarity" between working-class women, whatever their role in shoe production. It would take autonomous women's organizations for wage-earning women to advance their interests. But lines of marital status, and of a woman's relationship to the family economy, she argues, divided women workers just as surely as did lines of race or ethnicity. Once again, this is a deceptively fundamental challenge to our traditional notions of what the real divisions are that have historically limited the organizational advancement of the American working class.

Blewett underscores just how central questions of womanhood

have been to working-class women's activism. Simply in order to meekly attend a meeting or discreetly march down the street, let alone go out on strike or scream at a scab, women had to constantly prove to their communities that they were "respectable"—i.e., not prostitutes, derelicts or "bad girls."

**Still more challenges?** Blewett points to the ways in which married women's labors were embedded in the patriarchal constraints of the family wage economy. But aside from noting that women's "domestic responsibilities" limited the amount of time outworkers spent on shoebinding, she doesn't travel any further into the internal divisions of labor within the working class household as it evolved during the industrial revolution. A complete

analysis of the industrial revolution will need to integrate not just women's and men's waged labors but all forms of labor as they together supported the emerging economy.

We also need to push our analysis further in integrating the full dialectical relationships of women, men and the class struggle—and put the shattered pieces of the industrial revolution back together. Blewett's story of mostly female workers is still, ultimately (and necessarily, at this point), a corrective to the all-male studies that preceded it. Certainly, though, it's also one of the most exciting labor history books in a long time. ■

Dana Frank teaches in the history department at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

## NOTEBOOK

### I.F. Stone: A Portrait

By Andrew Patner  
Pantheon Press, 174 pp., \$15.95  
Summer is the season to catch up on the classics, which makes it the perfect time to touch base with I.F. "Izzy" Stone. 'Tis also the season for books editors to catch up on worthy books that somehow fell through the cracks, which brings us again to Stone—specifically, to Andrew Patner's extended profile of the iconoclastic scholar and reporter.

Classics-man Stone made his name in journalism by doggedly scrutinizing obscure portions of the public record until he sifted the meaty truth from the offal of official blather. From the '50s through the '70s, he put on a singlehanded eponymous show: *I.F. Stone's Weekly*. Stone's strong-minded independence and opinionated yet fact-laden journalism ought to be a lesson for the smile buttons that pass for a free press these days (see accompanying tirade, page 18). For a full-bodied treatment of this phase of Stone's career, check out Jerry Buck's documentary, *I.F. Stone's Weekly*—the paper's circulation eventually reached 70,000, not bad for a dogged eponymous show.

Patner reports on Stone the journalist, but today finds the 81-year-old on the trail of the scholarly scoop, ping-ponging through rare books in the Library of Congress, looking for Libanius in various editions and translations. Over the course of a few days and several riffling, extended interviews, Patner emerges with a portrait of a man possessed by the idea of human freedom, which draws Stone equally to ancient Greece and American radicalism.

If Patner's affectionate sketch sometimes descends to the level of Izzy's Cliff Notes reading list, it's always buoyed by Stone's keen, enthusiastic intelligence. (And, hey, the Great Books are, um, great books—no question.) Patner admits good-naturedly to being worn out by Stone's relentless mind, and you can't fault him. It's an impressive glimpse of a first-rate mind.

Largely self-taught, I.F. Stone—the scholar—is a good argument against college and in favor of higher education. Autodidact I.F. Stone—the journalist—is the only argument against journalism school you'll ever need.

—Jeff Reid



## Consumers exercise their options: boycott organizers nationwide try to create a variety of home non-shopping networks

By Pat Aufderheide

**M**ICHIGAN HOUSEWIFE TERRY Rakolta sits down with her kids to watch TV, and stumbles on *Murder...with Children*. Shocked at its vulgarity, she fires off angry letters to sponsors. They reply that they are reconsidering ad placement; Tambrands pulls its ads.

Rev. Don Wildmon organizes a coalition of viewers to monitor the May sweeps on the networks and boycott advertisers on programs most offensive to fundamentalist Christians.

The National Right to Life Committee, among others, protests the airing of NBC's *Roe vs. Wade*; Coca-Cola and Eastman Kodak, among others, pull their ads.

During this stormy spring on television, executives confronted the furious revival of outraged consumer activism, targeting the lifeblood of commercial TV—national advertisers. And they're running scared. All three networks have announced that they'll be airing less controversial programs next season.

**Pressure with a pedigree:** This wave of TV consumer pressure comes with a conservative pedigree. But the techniques are new and not only by the right. Boycotting, the exercise of consumer power (contrasted with citizen) power, has never the political map at the moment. The National Boycott Movement now counts some 120 in its ranks, and the AFL-CIO produces a handy list of what's buyable and what's not, often seen on union picket boards and in elevators.

On television, boycotts have a long tradition, as Professor Kathryn Montgomery shows in her highly readable history, *Target: Prime Time: Boycott Groups and the Struggle for Entertainment* (Oxford). As far

back as the blacklist era, networks and advertisers bowed to pressure groups. But starting in the '60s, women's groups, blacks, Latinos, gays and the Gray Panthers all organized to protest what they saw as negative images of their constituencies on television. And programs like the Maude episode in which Maude opts for an abortion mobilized groups on all sides.

### TELEVISION

If consumers learned how to attack the media monoliths in the '70s, the media learned how to deal with them. To cope with media reform and issue groups, networks beefed up standards and practices departments and procedures. (Quiz show scandals had originally called them into existence.) Networks often singled out one group to work with, negotiating both before and after production.

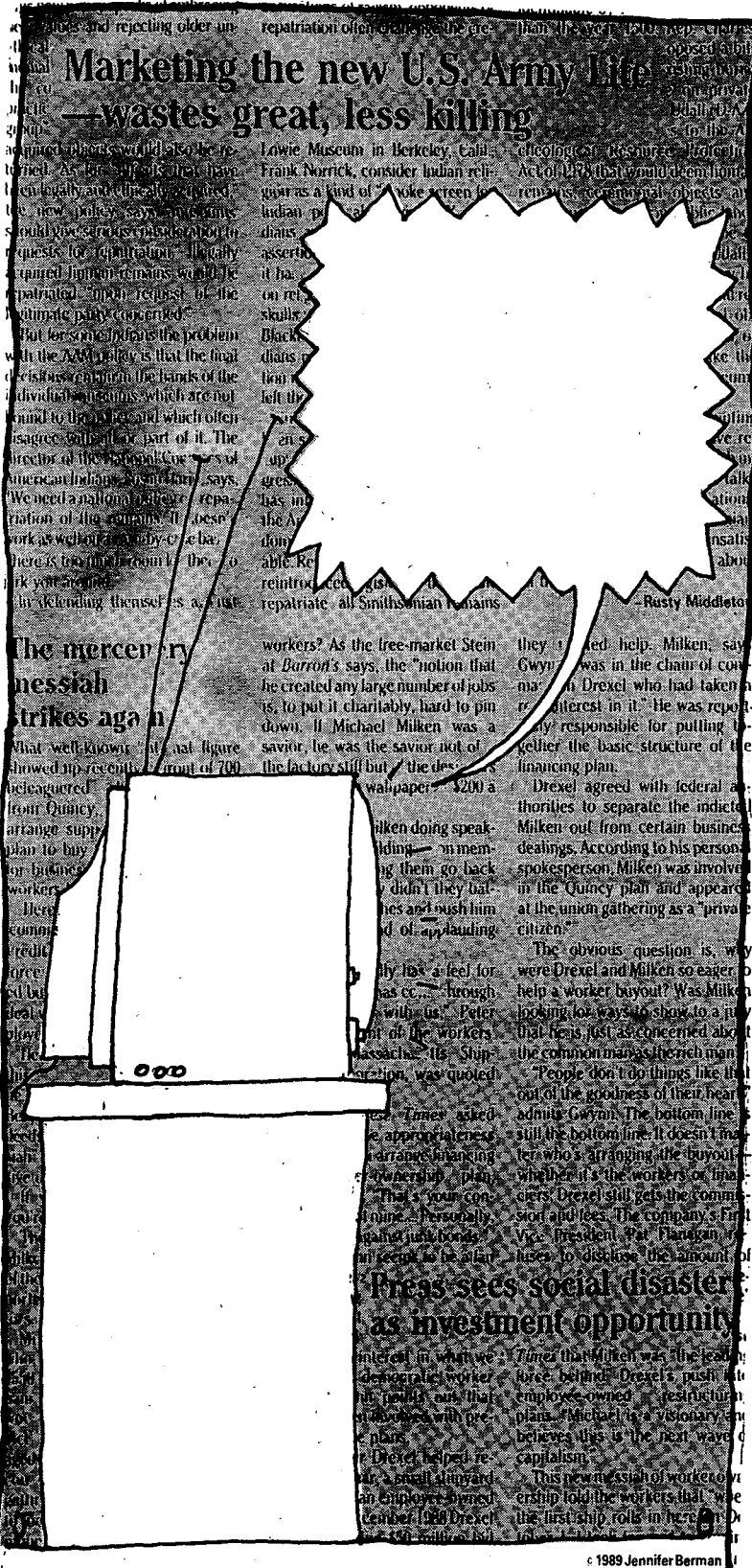
Dissent was managed, and changes were made. But the delivery of viewers for dollars was basically unaffected. Social conflict was bro-

### Starting in the '60s, women, blacks, Latinos and gays all protested negative media images.

kered into entertainment that touched on, but did not, typically, gender controversy.

**Sleaze and screams:** This time around, the process is different. The media reform movement has dwindled in the '80s down to a few dogged groups, often mired in holding-action legal measures. Many other or-

### Marketing the new U.S. Army Life—wastes great, less killing



from America's Most Wanted to Geraldo Rivera's satanism special to *Nightingales*. And the strategy works—up to a point. NBC, with prime-time programming distinguished for its sleaze (and a president who cheerfully talks about eliminating

### The TV industry has changed dramatically, partly through Reagan-era deregulation that resulted in network buyouts and station takeovers.

the nightly news) has been in top place among the three networks for four years.

But now comes the backlash. The problem is that advertisers like programming that gets lots of viewers. And "hot" programming—whether it's violent, controversial or prurient—draws. On the other hand, advertisers do not like angry viewers, and they sure don't like boycotts. It's not the loss in revenues from sales they worry about; it's the publicity and staff time.

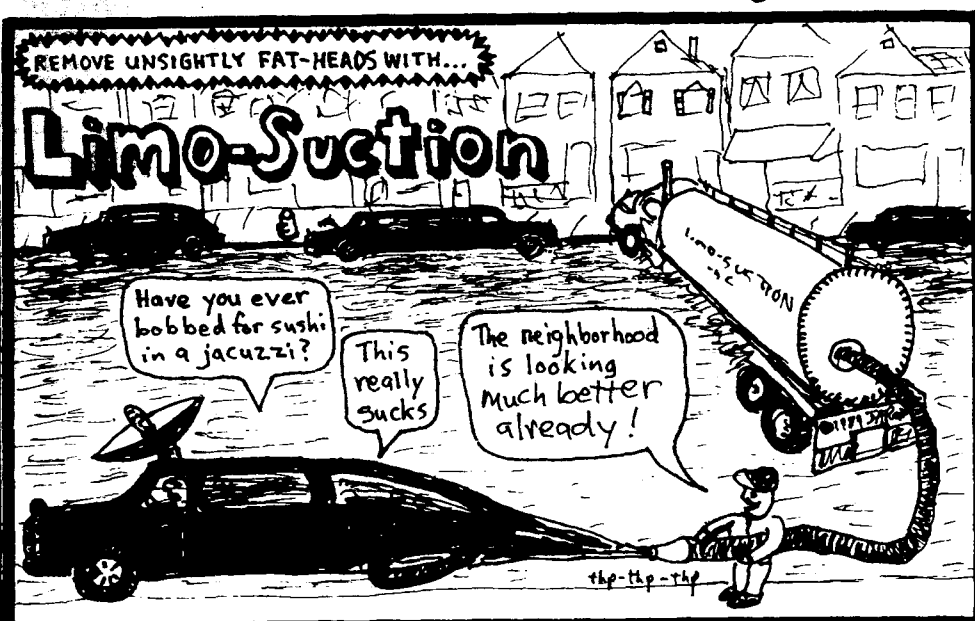
"We're talking about something called commercial TV," one advertising executive told *Variety* recently. "Something that is commercial in the sense that it's attractive, entertaining and fulfilling, if you will, and a good forum for advertisers to present their commercials in."

And some advertisers are listening to voices telling them the forum isn't right. Advertisers of products aimed at women dropped *Roe vs. Wade* like a dirty sponge. Ralston-Purina and Domino's pizza pulled ads off a *Saturday Night Live* program in which the word "penis" was mentioned. Mennen dropped out of now-defunct *HeartBeat* on ABC after complaints about an episode featuring an abortion.

**Big talk:** But these advertisers may be overreacting to isolated protests and inflamed rhetoric. Wildmon told colleagues at the National Religious Broadcasters convention that if Christians didn't fully back the boycott, "I don't think Western civilization will be around as we know it." Christian Leaders for Responsible TV, the Wildmon coalition, plans to announce its boycott target by early July.

Neither Wildmon nor industry executives probably need to duck as the sky falls in. Wildmon's earlier boycott of RCA products did not stop RCA from declaring a record-breaking profit year, and Wildmon's ten-

### An Urban Beautification Breakthrough!



ganizations couldn't keep their constituents mobilized or disbanded their media efforts once a campaign was won.

At the same time, the industry landscape has changed dramatically, partly through Reagan-era deregulation. The buying and selling of stations brought prices and debt loads up, and the networks also suffered buyouts and takeover attempts. Along with other budget cuts, network standards and practices departments were slashed. Meanwhile, independent TV stations blossomed, and cable and videocassettes proved fierce rivals for limited viewer time. Broadcast TV's solution to hold audiences and meet budgets: titillating, lurid (and cheap) programs.

The result is programs that range

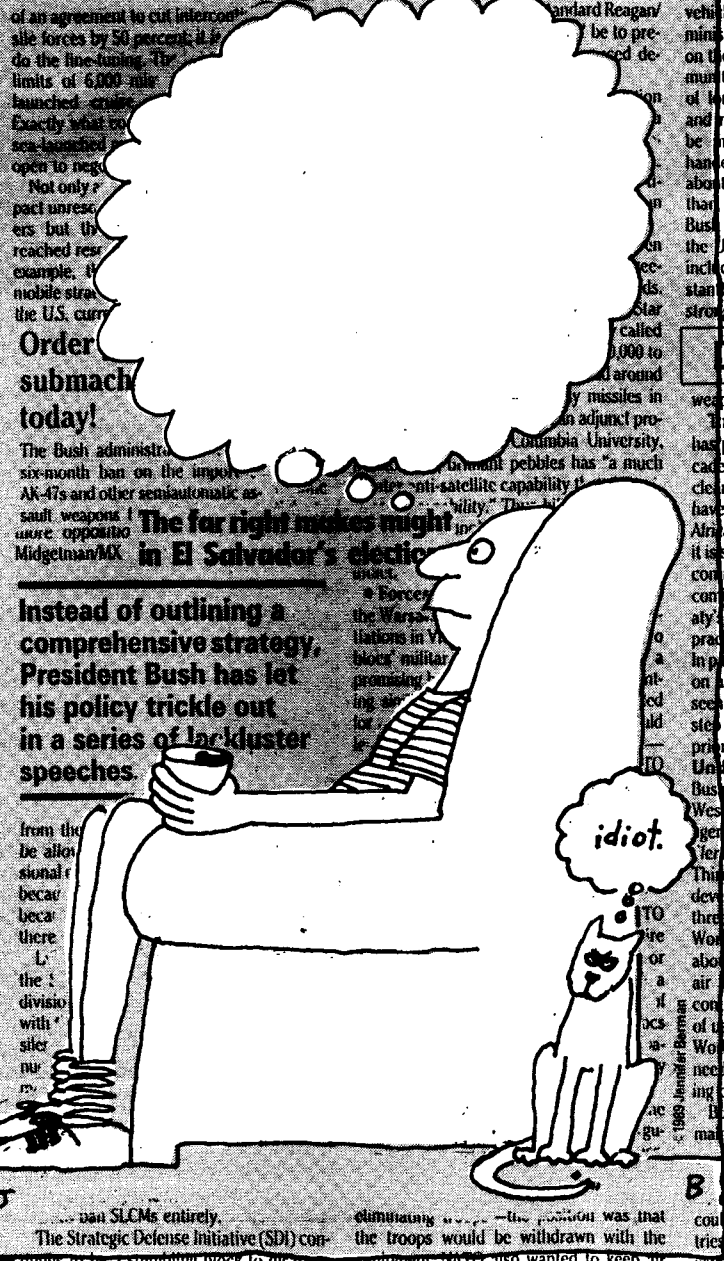


dency to exaggerate support is notorious in the TV industry. And this time, the Moral Majority has not joined the coalition.

**Equal and opposite:** In fact, there is no clear evidence that consumer boycotts, as a protest measure on broadcast programming, have ever been very effective, and post-broadcast boycotts have been particularly weak. Two networks have sponsored studies that showed boycotts don't work. An advertising agency's study determined that as many as 10 percent of viewers may be influenced. On the other hand, as one adman put it, "an equal number of people will boycott you for acquiescing to their demands."

The upshot of all the noise this spring was far from conclusive. A new independent survey in May showed widespread concern over sex and violence on TV. Seventy-two percent of those surveyed supported the idea of boycotts, and 25 percent supported a government ban on "objectionable material." But it's a long way from general discontent to focused protest. So far the marketplace has registered ambiguous results. *Roe vs. Wade* did sell all its advertising time, although it did so at cut rates and NBC may still lose \$1 million on it. Although the National Right to Life Committee pressured stations not to air *Roe vs. Wade*, only one station pre-empted it (compared with dozens who pre-empted the *Maude* episode when the Catholic Church mobilized anti-abortion protest). Fox's *Married...with Children* may actually have benefited from the media blitz

## Bush administration on arm "vision thing" is nowhere to b



around it. And an ABC movie about incest, *A Deadly Silence*, which some advertisers shunned, pulled the highest ratings for its time period, rewarding the advertisers who did stay with the program.

Although television programmers may have temporarily stepped over the boundaries of taste in recent seasons, they still have not stepped over the boundaries of blandness. Issues are still shrunk to personal drama on prime time. (Todd Gitlin's superb study *Inside Prime Time* charts how and why.) Even *Roe vs. Wade* was meticulously "balanced" and focused the issue as a personal one.

## Seventy-two percent of the TV viewers surveyed in a recent poll supported the idea of boycotts.

A mere whiff of the political and economic realities that inform social conflicts smells bad in production meetings. Marshall Herskovitz, a producer of ABC's *thirtysomething*, recently complained to the *New York Times Magazine* that ABC nixed a comment that government cut safety regulations on cars "so the car companies can make more money." Broadcast standards officials told him the line might be true, "but it would upset advertisers and had to be cut." And if programmer vigilance doesn't work, companies can always resort to boycott tactics

themselves. One fruit growers' association, reported the *Village Voice*, pulled its ads from some CBS affiliates after *60 Minutes* linked Alar and cancer.

The spring storm of consumer outrage shows how vulnerable a single commercial television program can be to intense pressure when market forces are unchecked and the wider public is disorganized. It shows there's a market downside to the sensationalist way of boosting ratings, and also that without regulatory constraints broadcasters are prisoners of their own numbers game.

But it does not mean that controversy will be drained out of broadcast television. That's already been done by commercial TV's sensitivity to the larger interests of the companies that pay them to reach millions of viewers at a time. This spring delivered a small and atypical taste of how powerfully a few advertisers set the agenda for what we watch.

Next season, we may see less of what TV calls controversy on the air. But the sanctimonious and the stuffy among us will probably be no happier with what they see instead. The movement to clean up TV may grow; Terry Rakolta, for instance, is organizing a consumer group. But then television programmers will do what they did with other protest groups—figure out how to institutionalize the managing of dissent. Pressure groups, after all, will never deliver the viewer numbers the television industry needs.

© 1989 Pat Aufderheide

# America's Most Wanted spurs a rise in television crime

By Barbara Osborn

**W**HAT YOU SEE AND WHAT you know could lead to the capture of America's most wanted." For 15 months, *America's Most Wanted* has opened with those words. Now Fox Television's biggest hit, the program has spawned clones on NBC (*Unsolved Mysteries*) and in syndication (*Crime Stoppers 800*, *America's Search for Missing Children*, *Crime Diaries* and *Has Anybody Seen My Child?*). *America's Most Wanted* signals the emergence of a new genre that knits real-life grit and drama with an unusual show of public purposefulness.

In case you've missed it, the program begins in a studio (fake) dressed to look like FBI headquarters (real). *America's Most Wanted* producers work closely with the FBI and local law enforcement officials throughout the country (real). Narration reads as if from a police report (fake)—how many bullets, what calibre pistol, etc. (real).

**Reel life stories:** Stories are biographical. Interviews with the vic-

tim's family, the police and others associated with the fugitive are conducted (real). Actors are cast that look like their real-life counterparts (fake). Sequences depict "police" taking notes and snapping on-the-scene photographs (fake). Snapshots, class photos, letters and other personal memorabilia dress it up (real). Principal locations are shot on location (real). Stylized, faux-realism characterizes the shooting and editing—tilting cameras evoke altered states, point-of-view shots

for protective legislation for children several years ago after his son was abducted and murdered.

Criticism of the show over the last year has focused principally on the

## In a sense, America's Most Wanted empowers viewers.

### CRIME

"reproduce" the experience of the victim (fake). Still with me? While the video track presents dramatized images, interviews (used as voice-over) run on the audio track (a coup! real and fake).

At the end of each segment the phone number, 1-800-CRIME89 is keyed into the bottom of the frame while series host John Walsh ticks off last-minute stats on the criminal. Walsh sports a gruesome real-life story of his own that Fox touted to the press. He became an advocate

hypocritical (disingenuous, at the very least) mantle of public service that cloaks a tightly wound entertainment. But dichotomizing the show between entertainment and public service—the Goofus and Gallant of television—simply reiterates the cynical charade that all TV news programming confronts. Additional criticism has focused on harassment of innocent citizens by agents following up bum leads, a disturbing trend but perfectly legal.

**Hyperactive television:** *America's Most Wanted* poses a unique set of problems, not because Goofus masquerades as Gallant, but be-



John Walsh

cause the program exhorts and enables its viewers to do something about crime. In a sense, it empowers the viewer. *America's Most Wanted* appeals to viewers' desire to combat the impotence in their own lives while addressing a major public concern—crime. In so doing, the show redresses some of the chronic laments about mass media.

This show encourages and channels public responsibility. It informs and motivates. Indeed this is interactive television. And when viewed from the dismal perspective of what has qualified as interactive television in the past—telethons and shop-

ping channels—*America's Most Wanted* is a beacon of humanitarianism in a swirl of consumption.

So what's wrong with *America's Most Wanted*? What's wrong is that crime is portrayed as a patchwork of human problems—wayward individuals—not as part of a large, often overwhelming social and economic fabric.

Without a doubt the show has found some zealous adherents. After all, what breeds suspicion and fear better than the human psyche alone with a television set? These armchair vigilantes hear, "Rat on your neighbor," and off they go, mental snapshots in tow, scrutinizing friends and strangers alike. The show's game rules easily lead, indeed have already led, to neighbor finking on neighbor, sister on brother, child on parent. Is this the new global village—a group of frightened but well-meaning shut-ins—geographically disparate, but united in crime busting?

*America's Most Wanted* admonishes its viewers: "Don't take action. Call us." Meaning, stay at home, lock your doors. If you want to know what's going on out there, watch TV. If you want to do something about it, use your phone.

**Barbara Osborn** is a New York writer whose work has appeared in *Film Comment*, *The Independent* and other publications.



# Fincapp

Continued from page 24

publish a cheap scratch'n'sniff version of "BORN TO SHOP" in Redbook that featured the gold embossed signature of Leona Helmsley.

**His rapid demise:** A few frightening examples of Fincapp's late work clearly illustrate the utter self-destruction found in what has been dubbed his "very, very ordinary period."

In "SURF NAKED" (*Mad Magazine*, April 1985), we see Fincapp wading into a fuzzy pantheistic tidal pool making naturalistic mud pies with Spinoza. This work was ignored by the academic critics, although a reviewer in *People* magazine dubbed it "good summer fun."

The mythic banality of his abject, yet profitable, "BABY ON BOARD" (distributed by K mart) made even ardent admirers shudder. Susan Sontage described it as "rolling kitsch"

and angrily announced that she would from that time forward no longer provide gushing blurbs or profound prefaces to Fincapp's work.

Scholars agree that following the "BABY ON BOARD" debacle, Fincapp became a truly broken man. He began to brazenly abuse ouzo among friends. For only in this condition could the once-proud Fincapp have produced the odious prole challenge "HOW'S MY DRIVING? CALL 1-800-EAT-SHIT" (*Hustler* magazine, March 1987).

Speaking at Fincapp's funeral, Yale critic Harold Bloom recalled being run over by a Saab while teaching a seminar on Fincapp's work in the garage of New Haven's Chapel Square Mall. Fighting back tears, Bloom lamented that "only rarely do we wish that death would have taken the author's work, rather than the author himself. Fincapp was such a man."

Woody Igou is an attorney and writer who lives in Florida.

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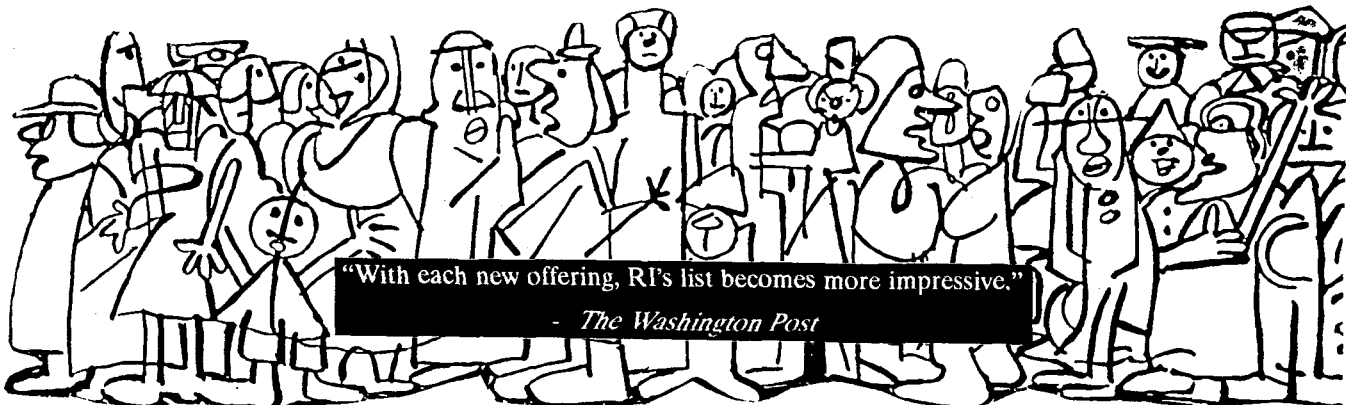
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ITT 24

## C A L E N D A R

### CHICAGO

June 23

"A Rally to Abolish the Death Penalty," sponsored by Amnesty International USA at 4 p.m. in the Daley Center Plaza at Dearborn Ave. and Washington Blvd. Over 1,000 AI USA members, in Chicago for the 14th Annual General Meeting, will be there. Speakers, balloons, buttons, inspiration. For more information call (312) 427-2060.

July 14-16

The first Green Cities Bioregional Conference will be held at Loyola University of Chicago, 6525 N. Sheridan Road. We are setting out to reclaim our neighborhoods and to reconceptualize cities in ways integral to the bioregions of which they are a part. Through workshops and panel discussions the conference explores an alternative vision of urban living. Registration \$35 in advance. Meals and accommodations extra. For more information contact Green Cities Planning Committee, c/o Agape House, 1046 W. Polk, Chicago, IL 60607.

July 28-30

The annual Midwest Academy Retreat will be held at the Westin Hotel O'Hare. The conference, co-sponsored by Citizen Action, has become one of the most

important and exciting gatherings of progressives in the country. A lineup of national speakers, candidates and leaders begins a program of trainings, discussions and workshops on health care, campaign skills, the environment, the economy, family issues, civil rights and much more. The registration fee is \$85. For more information: Midwest Academy Retreat, 225 W. Ohio #250, Chicago, IL 60610, (312) 645-6010.

### SPRINGFIELD, IL

June 23-25

The Eleventh National Conference of Women Miners will be held at the Illinois Hilton. Workshops on sexual harassment, women's leadership roles, family leave, health & safety, and life after layoff are featured, among others. Noted speakers include United Farm Workers First Vice President Dolores Huerta and United Mine Workers Secretary Treasurer John Banovic. Conference is open to all interested supporters. For more information contact Coal Employment Project, 17 Emory Place, Knoxville, TN 37917, (615) 637-7905.

### LOVELAND, OH

July 1

Grailville will hold its "Family Day Camp on Justice and Peace: International, Inter-Cultural, Inter-Generational" beginning at 10 a.m. Workshops, activities for adults and children. Songs, dances, nature walks, games. Child care. You bring your lunch; we provide dinner. Cost: \$15 per person, \$40-\$60 per family, according to means. For more information, write or call Grailville Programs, 932 O'Bannonville Rd., Loveland, OH 45140, (513) 683-2340.

### NEW YORK

July 10-21

**THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL**  
The 12th National Intensive Summer School, with Harry Magdoff, Ralph Miliband, Sungur Savran, Martha Herbert, Charlie Post, Juliet Ucelli and Ed Ott. Curriculum includes Marxist Theory of History; Science, Society and the Individual; Marxist Capital; and U.S. Capitalism and Working-Class Politics. \$200. Limited scholarships available. NYMS, 79 Leonard St., New York, NY 10013, (212) 941-0332.

### OAXTEPEC, MORELOS MEXICO

July 23-28

50th Anniversary Reunion of Latin American Friends Service Projects sponsored by AFSC and SEDEPAC. For more information contact American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, (215) 241-7159.

### TORONTO

August 9-13

The 8th Assembly of The Fourth World presents "Decentralist Congress, Making the World Healthy, Happy and Whole" at the University of Toronto, Canada. Featured speakers include Ivan Illich, Leopold Kohr and John Papworth. The Congress will include forums on community economics, organizing for change, bioregions, communication strategies, and profound spiritual transformation. The Fourth World is a movement to enhance the quality of all life in the biosphere through the development of a decentralist philosophy and specific actions. For more information contact The School of Living, 3030 Sleepy Hollow Rd., Falls Church, VA 22042, (703) 237-7507.

### NORTH HAMPTON, MA

August 10-13

The Center for Popular Economics is holding a conference on Progressive Economics in the 1990s. Aug. 10-13, in North Hampton, Mass. Includes workshops by CPE economists and activists on a wide variety of topics. Designed for activists and educators. No previous economics training needed. Call (413) 545-0743 or write CPE, Box 785T, Amherst, MA 01004.

### MIDDLE EAST

Sept. 23-Oct. 10

"A Pilgrimage of Peace," a Middle East study tour sponsored by New Jewish Agenda of Santa Fe, N.M. A unique opportunity to meet Israelis and Palestinians who care about peace and work together to overcome differences. 1989 cost \$2,000 inclusive from New York. Contact: Arline Goldberg, Rt. 14, Box 257, Santa Fe, NM 87505, (505) 471-4861.

### MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

November 2-11

7th Annual North America-Nicaragua Health Colloquium; November 2-11, 1989; Managua, Nicaragua. Unique opportunity for technical and personal exchange with wide range of Nicaraguan health workers. Includes teaching, fact-finding, tours. Contact: CHRICA, 347 Dolores #210, San Francisco, CA 94110, (415) 431-7760.



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## C L A S S I F I E D S

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## LIFE IN HELL

### LIFE IN HELL

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(WITH JANIE ANGELL AND LYNDA BARRY)

### PROVERBS PROVERBS PROVERBS (ALL TRUE)

HE WHO RUNS FROM THE STINGING ANTS MAY STUMBLE UPON ANGRY HORNETS.  
CLEVER NIGERIAN PROVERB

A BLOW FROM THE FRYING PAN, IF IT DOESN'T HURT, BLACKENS.  
POETIC SPANISH PROVERB

HE WHO KISSES THE LUNGFISH GETS CHEWED LIPS.  
SORDID ARGENTINIAN PROVERB

A COW MUST GRAZE WHERE SHE IS TIED, OR CHEW THE ROPE OFF.  
ELUSIVE SUDANESE PROVERB

WHEN THE HUMANS ARE AWAY, THE MONKEYS ENTER THE HUT, EAT UP THE MAIZE, AND REARRANGE THE FURNITURE.  
PERCEPTIVE ZULU PROVERB

MONEY IS LIKE AN EEL IN THE HAND: SLIPPERY AND WIGGLY, BUT EVER-SO-TASTY.  
JOULAR URBANIAN PROVERB

IF YOU CLIMB UP A TREE YOU MUST CLIMB DOWN THE SAME TREE, UNLESS YOU ARE A FLYING SQUIRREL.  
METAPHYSICAL BRAZILIAN PROVERB

WHEN A WISEGUY SAYS "PULL MY FINGER," DON'T DO IT.  
CHARMING CANADIAN PROVERB

IF A CENTIPEDE LOSES A LEG, IT DOES NOT PREVENT HIM FROM WALKING. IF A CENTIPEDE LOSES A HUNDRED LEGS, IT DOES NOT PREVENT HIM FROM SQUIRMING.  
SUBTLE SIAMSE PROVERB

DO NOT SCOAL YOUR LIPS TRYING TO EAT THE DONUT CHUNK FLOATING IN THE COFFEE.  
JOYSFUL AMERICAN PROVERB

TO BE A PERFORMANCE ARTIST IN ONE LIFETIME MEANS SEVEN REBIRTHS AS A STEREO SALESMAN.  
TASTEFUL AMERICAN PROVERB

NEVER ANNOY A HOWLER MONKEY, NO MATTER HOW TEMPTING.  
ESSENTIAL WELSH PROVERB

ALWAYS LICK THE SUCTION CUP BEFORE YOU SHOOT THE DART GUN AT THE TV SET.  
VULGAR AMERICAN PROVERB

A BIG FISH IS CAUGHT WITH TINY MARSHMALLOWS.  
AFFABLE AMERICAN PROVERB

SHOUTING PROVERBS FROM THE SAME PIT MAY LEAD TO UNPLEASANT GARGLING.  
PROVOCATIVE AMERICAN PROVERB



# A bumper crop of wisdom

**E**nigmatic philosopher Magnus Fincapp, known throughout literary and philosophical circles as "the Ludwig Wittgenstein/Lenny Bruce of Iceland," died tragically last month at the age of 88. His ironic demise—he was poached to death after inadvertently pitching his tent on an active geyser while salmon fishing—has only added fuel to the smoldering peat bog of the Fincapp legend.

Fincapp was, of course, best known for the publication of his very late philosophical works in the form of pithy bumper stickers. This breakthrough format, first unveiled in 1975, resulted from the brilliant combination of two of Fincapp's earlier concepts—"mind bites" (which he described as "fleeting brief philosophical tracts") and the Very Ordinary Language School of Philosophy (which he founded deep in the Bronx in 1970).

While critics now routinely excoriate Fincapp's work, it is grudgingly acknowledged that his bumper stickers made him the most widely read philosopher in history.

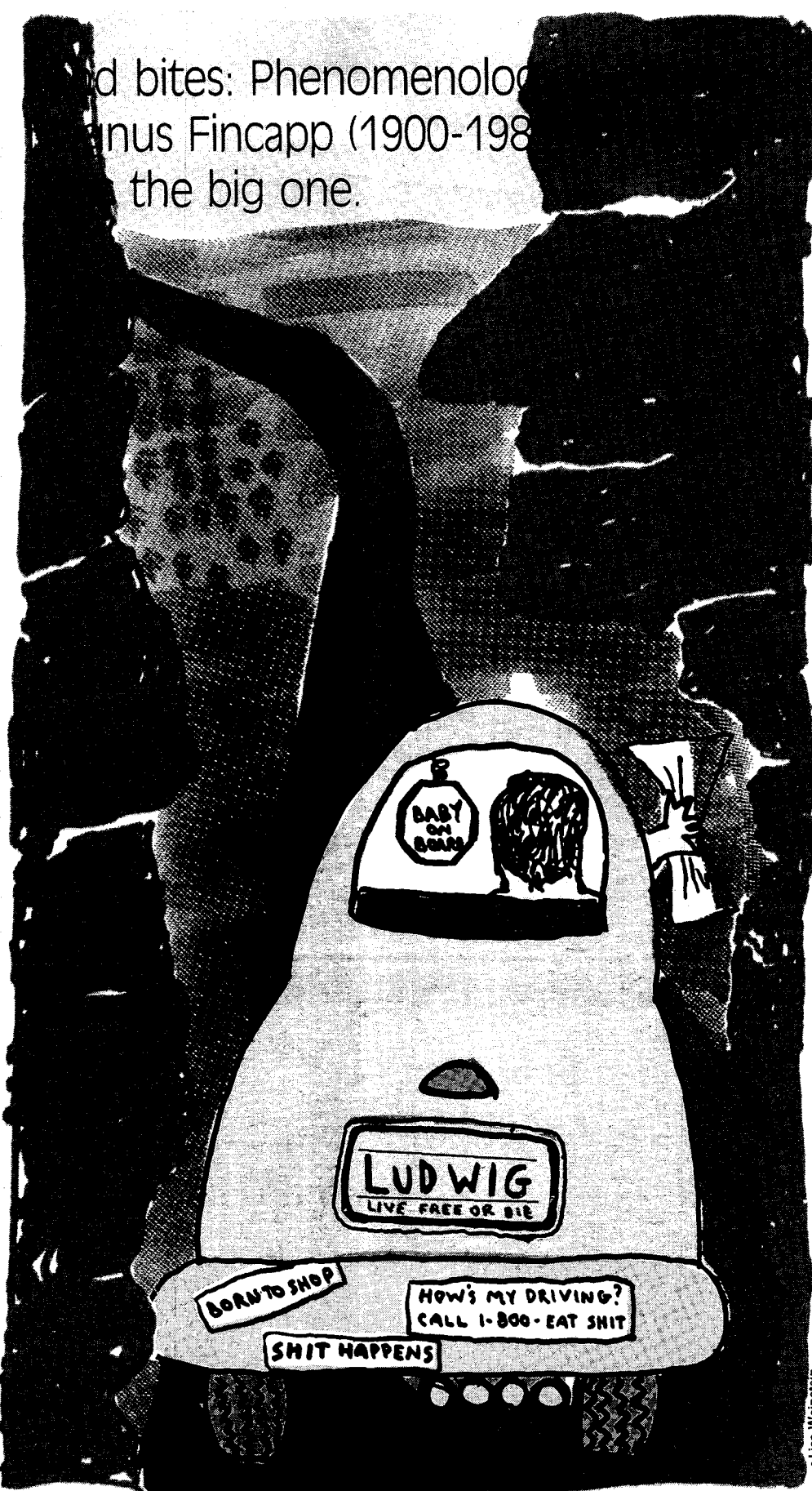
**His early years:** Fincapp was born in the small Icelandic fishing village of Vic. His earliest influence came as a small boy when he stumbled upon an empty life raft washed up from the wreck of the *Titanic*. As he later recalled in his autobiography: "I was at once pained by both the oceanic ennui of Kierkegaard and the stinging abyss of Pascal." Only after a visit to the village doctor did young Fincapp realize that he had been standing on a Portuguese man-of-war. Enraged by the sudden cheapening of his precocious ennui, Fincapp found revenge by racing to the village library and desecrating a volume of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese* with rancid haddock oil.

Fincapp was educated at Oxford, where he received his doctorate in philosophy in 1930. For the next 30 years, Fincapp labored in academic obscurity.

In 1959 Fincapp engendered the scorn of his Oxford peers when he wrote a review of Kerouac's *On the Road* proclaiming that Kerouac was "a vehicular oracle, a souped-up Wittgenstein on wheels." Due to this dispute, Fincapp left Oxford and accepted a teaching position at Columbia.

Upon his arrival in the U.S., Fincapp began a furious search for a new philosophical identity. Let us briefly note Fincapp's non-linear evolution: founder, Pre-Cambrian Nihilist Group (1962); editor, *Journal of Handbag and Accessory Teleology* (1965); co-chair, Society for the Mummification of W.V. Quine (1965); chief propagandist, Phenomenologists for McGovern (1968 Democratic National Convention); meta-choreographer, Hermeneutic Mime Troupe (1969); founder, Very Ordinary Language School of Philosophy (1970).

**The critical bombshell:** The turning point of Fincapp's career came in 1975. Fincapp had been dabbling with the concept of the "mind bite," radically distilled philosophical ideas that he described as "shorter than epigrams and slightly longer than silence itself." He then sought to illustrate this concept utilizing "very ordinary language." To this end, he enlisted his longtime curling partner and fellow reductionist Samuel Beckett to help him severely edit a 500-



page manuscript Fincapp had recently completed.

Armed with pruning shears, a paper shredder and 10 pounds of espresso, they retreated to a New Hampshire mountaintop. After two months, a weary Fincapp descended in Zarathustrian fashion, mysteriously carrying but a single sheet of paper and a 50-pound sack of shredded paper.

The bombshell exploded in the fall issue of the *Journal of Philosophy*, where Fincapp published "SHIT HAPPENS" (3" x 12", glossy green on white) in a unique tear-out bumper sticker format. It was, of course, an historic event in the annals of philosophy. It quickly caused pandemonium in academic circles as frantic readers scrambled to secure a copy (one

eminent phenomenologist "lost both cuff links" in a scuffle inside the Columbia Book Shop).

In a rushed special edition of *The Mind* entitled "Fincapp and the Scatalogical Imperative," critics heaped praise upon the groundbreaking work. Noted structuralist critic Jason Weedle explained that "Fincapp's reductionist and savage pessimism has exposed the definitive *Zeitgeist* of the times," adding in a footnote that "it also looks great on the bumper of my old Volvo." Two days later the *National Enquirer* picked up the story and ran it under the unfortunate headline, "Exposed *Zeitgeist* Shocks Passersby," and included a free "SHIT HAPPENS" bumper sticker in the issue.

Within weeks the bumper stickers were

found on vehicles nationwide. As Fincapp's agent Arnie Zipkin later recalled: "I knew we had a bullet on our hands. It was philosophy's first crossover hit. We were looking for 'SHIT HAPPENS' to go platinum by the second printing. At the end of the first week, I calculated that Fincapp had more readers than Nietzsche, Sartre and Descartes put together. Within a month we had our eyes on the big boys—Plato and Aristotle, with luck, even Kahlil Gibran!"

**His influence spreads:** Continuing in what he later termed his "Neo-Hobbesian/post-Elvis" period, Fincapp stunned the world a second time in 1981 with his powerful "LIFE'S A BITCH AND THEN YOU DIE" (3½" x 10", day-glow pink on gray), published in the winter issue of *Logic*. Writing in the *Obfuscationists Quarterly*, deconstructionist critic Michael Artoon described Fincapp's effort as one in which "the primordial hormonal angst is mirrored, if not replicated, by an insufflation of symbols. Is not Fincapp, in a Jungian sense, a bitch in heat, hounded by Lacan's Other, figuratively dressed in Liberace's postmodern tuxedo?"

Fincapp gained further notoriety when he instituted a nasty copyright infringement suit against his former colleague, Isaac Kenkle of Harvard. Kenkle's popular and critically well-received bumper sticker, "LIFE'S A BEACH" was published in the summer issue of *The Mind*. Fincapp blasted the work as "a vacuous remora, attempting to ride my work onto the bumpers of the masses." He settled out of court in 1982.

At the height of his fame, Fincapp became a minor hit on the TV talk-show circuit. Much beloved by talk-show hosts was Fincapp's unconscious habit of swallowing and regurgitating his monocle during interviews. Fincapp was also fond of signing his works and could often be found "among his people," autographing stickers at car dealership openings, stock car races and tractor pulls.

**The critical backlash:** Virtually overnight Fincapp became the Warholian prom queen of philosophy. With this came the predictable critical backlash. It began with the publication of Fincapp's third work, the whimsical "BORN TO SHOP" (4" x 12", black on pink) in *The Journal of the French Academy* in the spring of 1984. Fincapp described it as "a tongue-in-cheek exorcism of the capitalist excesses of the '80s, with just a naughty hint of *Dallas*."

Within days French deconstructionist critic Jacques Derrida spat forth a viciously obtuse 250-page review published as a 10-pound insert in the Sunday edition of *Le Monde*. In it Derrida attacked and destroyed any connection Fincapp could claim to myth, science, religion or politics—ultimately comparing Fincapp unfavorably with Jerry Lewis. In the U.S., Marxist critic Frederick Long denounced Fincapp's work, noting that "it flaunts the oppressive genetic inability in Western man to resist big-ticket item purchases at, or below, wholesale."

Perhaps Fincapp's gravest error was to  
*Continued on page 22*